BRIEF ROMANCES

FROM

BRISTOL HISTORY,

WITH A

FEW OTHER PAPERS FROM THE SAME PEN.

BEING CUTTINGS FROM THE COLUMNS OF THE "BRISTOL TIMES," "FELIX FARLEY'S BRISTOL JOURNAL," AND THE "BRISTOL TIMES AND MIRROR," DURING A SERIES OF YEARS EXTENDING FROM 1839 TO 1883.

BY J. L.

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DEDICATION.

TO THOMAS DAVID TAYLOR.

My Dear Taylor,

Several, though not the larger number, of the papers here printed together were published in the *Times and Mirror* during the period in which we were partners in that Journal. This gives me an opportunity, of which I very gladly avail myself, to express my sincere regard for one with whom I was intimately associated in business for eighteen years. I therefore dedicate the little Volume to you. I am well aware of the trifling character of the offering; but it will serve—if for nothing else—for a token that I look back with pleasant memories on the years in which we were united in the same undertaking and the warm personal friendship which survives that union.

JOSEPH LEECH.

PREFACE.

SINCE my retirement from the active duties of journalism, I have been asked by several old friends and readers to print in a collected form some of the "unconsidered trifles" which I wrote in the *Bristol Times*, *Felix Farley's Journal*, and the *Mirror*, during the forty-four years I was connected with these newspapers in their separate and combined character.* As I feel the kindness conveyed in the request, and it needs very little labour to comply with it, I have devoted a small portion of the leisure I have now (I may say for the first time in my life) at my command, to putting together this little book. I am very conscious that the effusions here printed have neither importance nor interest sufficient to justify their being again brought to light from the quiet oblivion into which they had subsided: but as I am assured there are still some, who read them when first written with a little favour, that would like to see them again, I have taken up the editorial scissors (long laid aside save for a work of this kind), and going through the old files, have cut from their columns a few of the contributions for which I am answerable. For though the little volume contains a good many items, it still (as may be supposed) includes only a small portion of the work done by the same hand during a period extending from 1839 to 1883.

If I have been misled by personal partiality into reproducing trifles which, having served their ephemeral

* *Felix Farley's Journal* (established in 1714) was incorporated with the *Bristol Times* in April, 1853, and the *Bristol Times and Journal* with the *Bristol Mirror* in January, 1865.

purpose as the light literary garniture of a local newspaper, might better have been allowed to lie undisturbed in the columns where they originally appeared—no great harm is done. The author has pleasantly enough employed several spare hours in the occupation of collecting and revising some old work, much of which he had almost forgotten: so that if the very limited edition now printed be left on hand as a penalty for self-complacency, he will yet be compensated in other ways for the little trouble the task has been to him.

In classifying the greater number of these sketches under the heading of "Brief Romances from Bristol History," I have tried to call attention to the many picturesque, curious, and often quaint, entries to be met with in the chronicles of our old city. Not a few of these entries are quite fragmentary or legendary, and most of them so short as to be merely suggestive. Of this vague characteristic advantage has been taken to weave upon them little fanciful stories intended to be illustrative of the events, as also of the conditions, of the place and period to which they refer. If nothing else come of apocryphal sketches founded upon the local passages and shadowy traditions cited, it is hoped they will induce Bristolians to study more learnedly—though not perhaps more lovingly—than the writer has done the romantic aspect of the past and early history of their old town.

J. L.

Burwalls, Leigh Woods.
August, 1884.

Chronicles of the Black Canons of St. Augustine's.

THE HUNTING MONKS.

In the three sketches below given I have endeavoured to realise a veritable passage in the conventual annals, and which is quoted from the original records by Barrett, in the following words :—"A.D. 1320. The Bishop of Worcester, at a visitation of the Monastery of Saint Augustin, ordered all the hounds kept by the monks to be removed, the almoner, frier Henry de Gloucester, to be displaced, and inquiry to be made concerning frier John de Scheftesbury, accused of incontinence with certain women unknown, and concerning William Barry, for sowing dissension among the brethren."

"Jacob's Wells" and "Clifton Wood" no longer suggest, when named, even a notion of what they really were at the beginning of the fourteenth century, when the Cathedral was a monastery standing in the neighbourhood of Bristol, with sylvan solitudes and wild downs stretching away up the high ground to the west of the religious house, and affording opportunities for sport to all who were so inclined and privileged to indulge in it. Clifton Wood still retains in *its* title the tradition of what all Clifton then was, namely, *a wood* or chase. Jacob's Wells bubbled up amongst tangled brakes and large trees, and a bridle path conducted the traveller over ferny commons and through forest glades from Westbury to the Monastery. The little sylvan road also led across Brandon-hill, and, by an easy descent, to the Norman gateway of the residential quarter of the Abbey.

Early on a fine summer morning, three horsemen rode over the hill by this same pathway, and paused for a moment to glance down on the tower of St. Augustine's. The first, who was a grave-looking man, wearing a small velvet cap and long cloak of dark cloth with sleeves, seemed in the light of master towards the other two, who always addressed him with an air of deference.

As they reined up their horses on this commanding spot, their attention was suddenly arrested by the sight and sounds from below. A number of fellows in hunting dresses were seen issuing, each with a leash of staghounds, from out the Norman gateway, which led from the cloisters and domestic buildings of the establishment, and filling the green in front with their sylvan shouts. Presently, too, appeared, mounted on a well-caparisoned strong horse, Henry de Gloucester, the almoner, with baldric and bugle : on the latter the jolly monk blew some long and merry notes of

venerie, which awakened many a sleeper in the neighbourhood, no doubt to grumble at the noisy matins of the frolicksome monks of St. Augustine. Father Henry was followed by others of the holy brotherhood, each as well mounted as the sporting almoner, and all as jovial and noisy. The tower and battlements of the monastery echoed again and again to the horns, winding all the variety of hunting sounds, by way of practice, from the *recheat* to the *mort* note, while the cry of the hounds and the voices of the woodsmen, as they got them together, made the old College appear more like the dwelling of a bold baron than the religious house of holy men.

"What can all this mean?" said the grave stranger on the hill, as he viewed the exciting scene below at that early hour—the old green covered with dogs and huntsmen, startling the early echoes with their sporting cries. "Are these the matins of the black monks of St. Augustine's"?

"Book and beads, your Grace," said one of his attendants, "seem to be less used here than the bugle and the wood-knife; but, I suppose, it is a peculiar mode of mortifying the flesh which they have."

"What wind Father John de Scheftesbury seems to have," interposed the other horseman, as that worthy Friar blew a note so long and loud that even the strangers' horses, though fatigued with travel, pricked up their ears to the enlivening sound.

There was little more time for conversation, for the sporting monks, hounds, huntsmen, and all, were now ascending Brandon-hill by the very same road which the travellers were about to take.

"I must see more of these *holy* men in their sylvan character," said the elder stranger, "and for this purpose, do you, Alfred and John, proceed with your horses to the monastery, and announce my intention to be there in the course of the day, while I accompany these Friars in their sports, that I may know more of their shameful irregularities, of which I now find the complaints were not unfounded."

The attendants did as they were ordered, and the elder stranger rode forward to meet the merry cavalcade, which appeared in the height of spirits and expectation.

"Well, old grey beard," cried Friar John of Scheftesbury, as he descried the stranger; "art thou for a morning's meal of hunting, or is there aught of mettle in that drooping palfrey of thine to run in the wake of as sweet-toned and true a pack as ever brushed dew from greensward!"

"I thought I should have been in time for matins at the monastery," replied the stranger.

"Come and have them on the downs, greybeard," replied the Friar; "you will have the benefit of clergy there, and I would as soon confess you beneath the frondent boughs of a spreading oak as under the gloomy arches of our old monastery."

"But *sylvæ habent aures*, reverend father," said the stranger, "and there may be more auditors than either imagine"

"And more spectators, too," replied the Friar, doffing his hunting beaver with great gallantry towards a cottage maiden, who was

attracted to the door by the sight of the sporting monks. "What do you think of those eyes in yonder damsel's head, old reverence?" demanded he.

"One of my age or your calling should never think of them at all," answered the stranger. "What would the Bishop of Worcester think of such things?"

"What the Bishop of Worcester might think of such things, I don't pretend to say; but what I think of the Bishop of Worcester, I will tell you—he is an old driveller."

"The Bishop of Worcester is obliged to you for your flattering opinion."

By this time they had reached the Down, and the view was one of overpowering beauty and interest: the finely-wooded plain, presenting here and there most picturesque openings and glades amongst fine and patriarchal oaks, which interlaced their dense and massive arms in each other. The sun had risen above the eastern hills, and flung its blaze of orient light over the broad expanse of the Severn, which glistened in the distance to the hunter's eyes like a sea of molten silver, through many a vista in that magnificent scene; on the boughs of the old trees the mellow thrush and lively linnet were trolling out their clear morning song, and the eglantine and other sweet smelling shrubs, entangled amongst the brushwood, sent forth their morning incense of refreshing fragrance. The stranger looked round and round, wrapt in admiration of all he saw and felt, and drinking in with the balmy atmosphere of the morning draughts of deep unspeakable pleasure, until the very senses themselves seemed to reel with the intensity of their own enjoyment. Neither were the monastic sportsmen themselves (often as they had wound their horns and careered their steeds amid the scene) insensible to the almost new glories in which nature seemed arrayed on this morning. "Well, old worthy," shouted Friar John, "is not this as fair a place for matins as our old grey monastery?"

"I believe it is," said the stranger, seriously; "the heart of man should not be least thankful in the place where God seems to have been most bountiful. Beneath the most sublime pile, amid the most solemn ceremonial, I have not felt as I now feel, while nature seems to rejoice in light and loveliness around."

"And there's an anthem for you, old moralizer," cried Henry de Gloucester, as with a burst of tongue, deep and sonorous, the hounds opened on a noble stag, which bounded from the thicket. The view-holloa rose from all sides, and note on note followed, as each jolly monk wound his horn in "musical conjunction." The stranger had no option, for his palfrey, pricking up its ears, forgot all its fatigues, and dashed forward with the crowd.

"Well rode, old moralizer," shouted the almoner, as the stranger swept by him, the long skirt of his sad-coloured cloak floating in the morning breeze.

"Tantivy! there goes Beelzebub!" laughed Father John; "and if we don't make haste, he's sure to make his breakfast on the buck." The run was not very long before the noble animal stood at bay, but with such expert woodsmen the final struggle was

short, and the stag, ham-strung by the dexterous hand of Friar John, was soon dispatched.

"Now," said the jocose Friar, wiping his wood-blade, "I am ready to confess you, Father Greybeard, according to promise."

"Then let us move to yonder oak," said the stranger; "and I will avail myself of your ghostly services."

"And now, son," said the Friar, with mock gravity, when they had reached the spot, "let us know your name before your sins."

"My name," answered the stranger, "is Arnold"

"Arnold—what?"——

"Bishop"——

"Bishop?" echoed the Friar——

"*Of Worcester*," continued the prelate, while the friar stood pale and astonished, with his mouth and eyes wide open, "and I charge you, Friar John of Scheftesbury, with levity, licentiousness, irreverence, and blasphemy, and do degrade you from the place you have disgraced, in common with others of this abandoned brotherhood. I also command you, on pain of further and severe punishment, not to return within the bounds of your monastery for three days, nor communicate the secret of my identity."

The Bishop pointed, as he spoke with a commanding air of authority, in the direction of Westbury, and Friar John directed his course towards that village, without once turning to look back on the stern countenance of the prelate.

At noon, on the same day, the brotherhood of Saint Augustine's, all dressed in the pride of their orders, entered from the chapter-room with the Bishop, for the purpose of hearing the charge from one who had been, all unknown to them, the hunting companion of many during the morning. When the last echoes of the *Te Deum* had died away, the prelate, casting a penetrating glance on all around, said, in a voice of deep command, "I have paid this visitation for the purpose of inquiring into certain rumours concerning the economy and discipline of this house—both, I am assured, most shamefully loose—which have reached me. I have heard that the monastery of Saint Augustine's more resembles a kennel and a place of riot than a religious house. Is that true, Brother Henry of Gloucester?"

"May it please your reverend Grace," said the almoner, stepping forward, with a look of feigned humility, "it is not!"

"Do not the dogs eat of the crumbs of your refectory, which should feed the children of the poor?" demanded the Bishop.

Friar Henry answered in the negative. "I demand again," said the prelate, in a voice of thunder, "are there not unclean hounds harboured in this house?"

The imperturbable almoner answered "No."

"Your own tongue shall confess the falsehood," said the Bishop; "you shall precede me and open every door in the monastery, until these creatures are unkenneled."

Surprised and appalled at this extraordinary scene, the brotherhood followed the Bishop and almoner, and saw one door opened after another, but no hounds appeared. "He is not likely to find them," whispered Friar Thomas to his companion, "unless the

almoner is fool enough to show the place." Friar Thomas was right: the last door was opened to no purpose, and the almoner, confident in the ingenious construction of his kennel, turned round to repeat his assurances.

"Hold your false tongue," cried the Bishop: "your trick of concealment shall not avail you; from the mouths of the brutes themselves you shall hear the proofs of your own mendacity."

Then turning to one of his attendants of the morning, he said, "Alfred, wind me one of your notes of wood-trickery on this very spot, and let these bad men see the fruits of their own false-hoods."

The group were then standing in the midst of the cloister, and the man thus addressed, taking from beneath his cloak a hunting horn, wound a long and sonorous note, until the ancient monastery echoed again and again with the sound; hardly, however, had it ceased, when it was answered by the full, deep, and simultaneous cry of a neighbouring pack of hounds, while the abashed and convicted brotherhood stood staring in conscious guilt at each other.

"Now," said the prelate, looking round on the monks, "you see your hunting companion of this morning has not taken lessons in venerie for nothing. You may conceal your dogs from my eyes, but not their voices from my ears."

THE FALSE ALMONER.

[The visitor, the Bishop of Worcester, ordered the almoner, Friar Henry, of Gloucester, to be displaced.]

It is the dole hour, and a number of pilgrims and mendicants have collected at the usual place for receiving the alms allotted by the Abbey to poor applicants. Friar Henry, however, has not yet arrived; an hour passes, still he does not make his appearance, and the hungry claimants grow a little discontented and begin to murmur, when the sliding doors of the window, through which the dole is handed out to them, are drawn back, and the voice of Friar John is heard calling to them as "a lazy pack, not keep him all day with their beggarly doles."

"You might as well, holy father, give that which you give graciously," said an applicant in palmer's dress.

"For this saucy answer you may feed on your own staff," answered the almoner, "for a morsel you shall not have here to-day—fall back."

The repulsed pilgrim did as he was bid; but though standing aloof, he seemed to watch the portions given and the persons who received: the former were very small in many instances, and the latter were not a few of them vagabonds, idlers from the city—a class of persons for whom the alms of the Abbey were never intended. Any poor wanderer that presumed to be a little more importunate or pressing for his or her turn were told to get

away, as saucy varlets, about their business, and refused the dole altogether.

At length the almoner's eye caught that of the palmer watching him. "John," cried he in a passion to the porter, "take yonder fellow by the shoulder and thrust him outside the gate, and teach him to bring his evil eye to bear upon somebody else."

The Abbey porter, who was a fit coadjutor of the unworthy almoner, was proceeding to execute his commands, when the palmer darted a quick glance at him. "Stand aloof, minion," cried he, "or rather execute *my* orders. Throw open that gate, and let those poor people, who have been kept waiting or thrust out, be admitted; and you, unfaithful steward (addressing the almoner), quit that post for ever, of which you have proved yourself so unworthy, and let me never see your head again under the roof of this monastery. This is the sentence of your Visitor, Arnold, Bishop of Worcester."

Friar Henry wanted no confirmation of the fact: abashed he retired from the spot, while the Bishop took his place amid a murmur of thanks and blessings from the poor, who never before were so plentifully helped as on that morning, when the dole was delivered by a Bishop who saw and acted for himself.

AN UNEXPECTED WITNESS.

[And he caused inquiry to be made concerning the conduct of Friar John of Sheftesbury, accused of incontinence with several women unknown. —*Ibid.*]

Wearied with a day's visitation of more than ordinary anxiety, the Bishop was refreshing himself with a quiet and contemplative walk amongst the elms in front of the Abbey, when a young woman, advancing from behind the trunk of one of the largest of the trees, suddenly accosted him, imploring justice and protection at his hands.

Arnold promised both, if in his power, and invited her at once to tell her story. It was a short but unhappy one. She was the victim of her own credulity, and of the arts of one of the monks of the adjoining Abbey, who, after having induced her to leave her father's roof, had now deserted her to want—impudently to her own face denying any knowledge of her, and threatening, should she attempt to carry her complaint to the old Abbot, to have her thrust from the place, or ducked in the pond as an impostor.

An indignant flush rose to the Bishop's forehead as he demanded the name of the unworthy brother.

"Friar John, called of Scheftesbury, lordly father," replied the woman.

"Enough," said the Bishop. "An hour before noon to-morrow be at the Abbey gateway yonder, ready to answer my summons, if called. But say, what is your name?"

"Maria Ceste, my lord."

"Then, be in readiness at the time and place I mention," and so speaking the Bishop entered the monastery.

. . . . . .

"Brethren," spoke the Bishop next morning as he took his seat in the chapter-room, "I grieve that there are still greater and more sinful irregularities amongst the members of this house than I yesterday investigated and endeavoured to correct. The awful sin of incontinence, I am told, attaches to some of your Order—aye, to some who are now present and before me," and he fixed his eye with a marked directness on Friar John de Scheftesbury.

"If your lordship refer to me," said Friar John with the coolest audacity, "and your glance would seem to say so much, I can only declare that your poor servant is as innocent as the unweaned child. If I have enemies and accusers confront me with them, and I will soon prove their falsehood."

"I take you at your word," replied the Bishop, and he whispered to an attendant, who returned accompanied by a woman, that on a sign from the Bishop threw back the hood of her mantle, which hid her face.

"Maria—" involuntarily exclaimed the Friar, forgetting for a moment his self-possession in his surprise—then recovering himself, but not before he had betrayed his knowledge of the unhappy woman, he added, "My lord, I know not the woman, but as an impostor who once threatened me with a false accusation."

"Fallen brother," said the Bishop solemnly, "add not mendacity to your other crimes; but, removed from the scene of your wickedness, try to atone in prayer and penance for your past life. This house no longer affords shelter to a polluted head."

THE IRREVERENT MONKS.

[In 1278, Godfrey Bishop of Worcester, in his visitation to the Abbey of St Augustine, Bristol, found it as well in spiritual as temporal matters greatly decayed; and ordered that in future they do not, as bees, fly out of the choir as soon as service is ended, but devoutly wait as became holy and settled persons, not as vagrants and vagabonds; and returning to God, give thanks for their benefactors, and so receiving at last the fruits of their religion, to which they have specially devoted themselves.—Barrett, on the authority of the *Annal. Wygorn.*]

It was a bright and clear November morning, the winter sun was streaming through the stained windows on the assembled monks, who chaunted the Litany in the choir of the Abbey of St. Augustine. But however solemn the sounds might have seemed to those who passed by, the sight was not an edifying one to

persons who witnessed it within. Of all the cowled and cassocked worshippers hardly one seemed to feel that he was in the presence of the Most High. They lolled and lounged about, and some chatted to each other in an under tone, while the rest chaunted. The old Abbot sat listlessly in his throne and mumbled his part, but none appeared to care for him : indifference and irreverence everywhere exhibited themselves, and spoke of discipline relaxed and duties slurred over.

"Who...is ..that...grim...face ..by...the ..door... ?" asked one brother of another, moulding his question to the music of the chaunt, singing it in fact in his neighbour's ear.

"Sancte Raphael—I...do...not.. know...him," chaunted his neighbour, blending the Litany of the Saints and their loose gossip together. "Omnes sancti angeli et archangeli, but ..his...face ..is ...sour...enough...to...turn...milk," he continued. "He...keeps .. his...eye...on...you...and...me...orate pro nobis," added the first speaker. And he was right enough; the stranger, who wore the costume of a Benedictine, and was standing near the entrance to the choir, joining in the worship, was at the same time closely observing the loose and irreverent manner in which the service of God was being celebrated.

At length the prayers, such as they were, concluded; the Abbot rose in his throne, and pronounced in a feeble voice the blessing, "Benedicat vos Omnipotens Deus, Pater et Filius et Sanctus Spiritus." The monks did not wait for the last word, but shouting out "Amen" were rushing across the nave in a tumultuous body towards the south portal leading to the Refectory, when a loud and distinct voice commanded them to remain.

There was something so authoritative in the tone that, though unused for a long time to care for any one, they involuntarily stood still, and turned towards the stone pulpit from which the voice proceeded, and where they now beheld the strange Benedictine, his hands uplifted and his eyes flashing with indignation, as he looked down upon the disgraceful scene, more worthy the public room of a hostelry than the holy precincts of an abbey church. "For shame! for shame!" cried he; "but that I behold it with mine own eyes, I could not have believed that God's worship had been so irksome to you that you should thus as bees fly out of the choir, when service is ended, with such noisy and profane haste! Had you acted up to your calling and consistent with your characters, you would have devoutly waited in your stalls as became holy and settled persons, to give God praise for his benefits in a few moments of private prayer, and not departed with riot and noise like vagrants and vagabonds, as though Satan and not the Most High had made your choir his residence?"

There was now no mistaking who the stranger was. The culprit monks felt, as it were, in spite of themselves fascinated and fastened to the paved aisles, under the severe eye and commanding brow of Godfrey of Worcester. A muttered word that "it was the Visitor" ran through the brotherhood, and they hung their heads to receive in silence the indignant rebuke of a Bishop who was known "to see things for himself."

THE OLD ABBOT.

[In the year 1282 the Bishop of Worcester visited the Monastery, and stopped there three days: he found all well, only that the old Abbot lived out of the Monastery, in a manor of his, to the loss of the convent. —*Barrett, Article on the Abbey.*]

"Where is your Abbot?" inquired the Visitor, as Prior Henry received him on dismounting from his palfrey in the Monastery yard.

"I will send for him," said the Prior, "and he will doubtless return to await your Lordship's pleasure by sunset."

"That is not an answer," said the Bishop, in a severe tone. "I asked you, brother, where your Abbot was, and I expect to be informed directly!"

"Then," replied the Prior, "he is at his country-house at Leigh——"

"And has been there?" interrogated the Bishop ——

"For some time," continued the Prior, like a man who reluctantly gave evidence against his superior.

"That is sufficient," added the Bishop; "send not for him. I will visit the good father in his rustic retirement."

. . . . . .

Three days after this, about noon, the old Abbot was seated at a table under the shadow of the ancient porch of his country-house at Leigh. Before him was such fare as Abbots in those days indulged in, and to which he was applying himself with a diligence which showed that the affairs of the fraternity of St. Augustine's were not troubling him much. He paused, however, as now and again the breeze bore to his ears the sound of horses' feet approaching along the bridle path.

Having convinced himself, as the sounds drew nearer and nearer, of the approach of strangers, he blew a silver whistle which was pendant from his neck. "Jasper," said he to the old man who answered the summons, "I hear visitors coming: remove these things from the porch, and prepare a refection for the strangers in the hall." However, before Jasper could comply with these orders, two horsemen made their appearance, and saluted the Abbot, who mumbled a hasty benediction, manifestly a little confused at being discovered by strangers thus indulging at noon-day.

"Father," said the elder of the two, pointing to the table, "when the shepherd is thus enjoying his ease at a distance from the fold, who is to look after the flock?"

"When I know by what authority a stranger thus rudely questions me," replied the Abbot, whose flagging spirit and waning dignity were roused by this home observation from one he did not recognize, "I may possibly be inclined to reply, but not till then?"

"By the authority of a Visitor," answered the horseman.

"Godfrey of Worcester?" inquired the Abbot.

"The same."

"Then if Godfrey of Worcester," continued the old Monk, "be what men represent him to be, he will not hastily judge an old man who, as his eyes grow dim and his hearing dull, prefers to the cloistered shade the sunlight of the country and the song of birds, and gratefully feels God's beneficence through every sense better than if he were shut in between tall Gothic walls and gloomy arches. Besides, I wot that though the shepherd be absent, you have not found the sheep unruly."

"True," said the Bishop; "but to this the house is beholden to a faithful Prior, and not to the watchful diligence of a resident Abbot."

"Then, my Lord, on the brow of that faithful Prior let my mitre be placed. I seek not to retain a charge for which declining years have disqualified me. Let Prior Henry assume the honor as he has the care. I ask but to be allowed to end my days in this quiet retreat, satisfied if some summer's evening I fall asleep for ever to this world under the shadow of this peaceful porch, the last sound in my ears that of the singing birds, the last light in my eyes that of the setting sun."

"Such was the very proposition I had come out to make to thee," said Bishop Godfrey. "The requirements of the good house of St. Augustine demand that the staff should be in younger and more muscular hands than yours; and next to wielding it well, I believe is the merit of yielding it gracefully."

THE ABBOT'S TREE.

MR. EDITOR.—Your last week's paper contained the following paragraph :—

"THE ABBOT'S TREE.—COLLEGE GREEN.—The stroller through College Green, at this period of the year, has probably been struck with the advance which one of the old trees there has made over its surrounding neighbours in greenness. The tree we allude to is situate at the west end, towards the entrance to College-street, and is always in leaf a considerable time before the others. There is a fanciful tradition relative to it amongst the old people round about the neighbourhood, who call it "*The Abbot's Tree;*" and the story is that an abbot of the adjoining monastery of St. Augustine's, who was wont to roam about the pleasant green in the cool of the evening, and had become quite attached to the locality from the many pleasant hours he had sauntered there, ordered that his body should be buried in his beloved haunt; and that, in compliance with his wish, this spot was selected for his sepulture. A tree, so the tradition runs, was afterwards placed above his remains; and so had the fat abbot, as Jack Falstaff said, "larded the lean earth," that the vegetation of the tree is on this account more quick and luxurious than that of any of the others around it. To those who, noticing the age of the tree, may think this an anacronism, we have only to say, that like the successor of Joseph of Arimathea's thorn at Glastonbury, 'tis a lineal descendant of the old stock."

Many years ago I resided in College-green, and with me lived a brother (since dead), who was something of an antiquarian, at

least sufficient to give him a love of our old locality. He was fond of loitering about the Green under the old trees (and at that time, I should tell you, the Green presented more the secluded air of a Cathedral close than its shopped sides now assume) : In mid-day he would be found musing amongst the cloisters, or, if service was going on, seated in the corner of the south transept listening to the organ, feeding his fancy with pictures of monastic days and ancient times. In this manner he wasted his prime, reading everything he could lay hold of about the Abbey and the Abbots, and spending his days, as it were, under the shadow of the Cathedral, notwithstanding my repeated remonstrances and assurances that he could never by such pursuits hope to gain anything higher than the office of sub-sacristan : however, poor fellow, he died before this was vacant, and was by his own request buried within the precincts he was so fond of.

He used to amuse himself by writing a good deal, too, for he left behind in his desk a quantity of manuscripts. He had several sketches begun, but few or none of them finished. Amongst them, however, was one, of which the paragraph in your paper of Saturday last reminded me, and which, as some little illustration of the tradition to which you refer, I beg to place at your service.

THE ABBOT'S TREE.

(A Tradition of old St. Augustine's Abbey, Bristol.)

Towards the close of the thirteenth century, the death of Abbot William de Keynsham caused a vacancy in the Monastery of St. Augustine, Bristol, and great were the arts and intrigues resorted to by two of the brotherhood, each using every effort to get himself elected. So much, indeed, was the matter debated, that the citizens appeared to take an interest in it hardly inferior to that experienced within the Abbey, and on the morning of election the number who crowded to the great church, and even penetrated to the passages leading to the cloisters and chapter-house, was almost incredible.

At about eleven, the Prior and a body of Canons issued from the late Abbot's house, and proceeded to the chapter-room, under the covered cloister way, through a line of inquisitive spectators. As soon as they had taken their seats, the license of their royal patron, authorising them to choose an Abbot in the room of William de Keynsham deceased, was placed in the hands of the Precentor : a text of scripture was then read and expounded : the exposition was short, but though short, still too long for the impatience of the Chapter, who were in a hurry to go to work : after this a hymn, *de Sancto Spiritu*, was sung, and all present having no right in the election of an Abbot being solemnly ordered to withdraw, the letter of license was read, and the election by scrutiny proceeded with. The votes of all having been taken, the three scrutators retired to a corner of the chapter-room to write down and reckon the votes, which were given privately on pieces of paper. This was an anxious moment for the two most sanguine expectants, as well as for the Canons themselves, and the people,

who without the great church awaited the announcement, were also affected by the lively excitement of suspense.

At length it went round with a buzz amongst the assembly outside that the scrutiny was over, and presently the door of the chapter-house was thrown open, and the Canons appeared, four of their number bearing aloft in their arms the jolly person of fat Friar John, while the rest chaunted in solemn measure the *Te Deum Laudamus*, and in this order they entered the church by the west passage (a way having been made for them through the dense crowd) to the high altar, upon which they deposited their heavy burden, saying over him the usual prayer on such occasions.

This concluded, the Precentor came forth from the choir, and mounting the stone pulpit proclaimed to the laity and clergy, with which the nave was crowded, the result of their choice in the following form :—

"Whereas the Monastery of St. Augustine has become vacant by the recent death of Wm. de Keynsham, the last Abbot, who has been ecclesiastically interred, and all those who could be present, and have right of electing a future Abbot, having come together this day, and agreed that the said election should be made by scrutiny, it has been clearly found that the best and major part of the whole said convent have agreed upon Friar John Strete, a provident and discreet person, competently learned, eminent for his morals and conversation in life, a priest in orders, expressly professing the rule of St. Augustine, and the order of canons regular in said monastery, of ripe age, begot in lawful matrimony, prudent in all temporal and spiritual matters, whom nothing prevents of canonical institution. Therefore, I, Simon Dunster, precentor of the said monastery, on behalf of myself and the whole convent, by the power given me by the whole convent, invoking the grace of the Holy Spirit, have elected, and do hereby proclaim the election of our said brother, John Strete, for Abbot of the monastery aforesaid."

This announcement made, the Precentor descended from the pulpit, and the canons, issuing from the choir, conducted their newly-elected head to the abbot's house, while a buzz of surprise seemed to break involuntarily forth from the congregated crowd of laity and clergy in the nave; for Friar John was neither of those between whom the public generally had divided the chances of success, and the last person on whom any one but those immediately in the secret dreamed the election would fall. But no one was more astonished than Friar John himself. When he awoke that morning he had no more notion that before the evening he would be Abbot of St. Augustine's than he had that he would be King of England; and when he heard his own name announced by the scrutators in the chapter-room, for a moment he fancied it was a solemn joke. In fact, Prior John was as unfit for the situation as the situation was unexpected by him. He was the easiest, laziest, quietest, fattest member of the monastery; he had no care for learning, but a most serious love of eating: his delight was, having made a good dinner, to stroll leisurely about the green, or take a seat on the porter's bench, by the Abbey gatehouse, and gossip with that functionary until, gradually closing his eyes, he fell asleep in the sun.

Yet strange as it may appear, these were the very qualities which made Friar John the Abbot of St. Augustine's. The Monastery, perhaps, was never in so lax and indolent a state. Discipline there

was little or none; learning was a shadow within its walls; its religious services were slurred over or discontinued; and, to use the words of the Bishop of Worcester, so remiss and regardless of all due observance and decency had they become, that when prayers were over they flew like bees out of the choir, instead of devoutly waiting, as it became holy and settled persons, to offer a few words of mental thanksgiving to Heaven. They kept a pack of hounds for their especial sport; and the solemn repose of the monastery was often disturbed by the noise and barking of these animals. Then the brotherhood were scandalized by the reputed irregularities of some of its members, and especially of one John de Scheftesbury, whose gallantries were notorious through the city. Besides this, there was a system of domestic plunder carried on amongst the officers and servants of the establishment; Henry, of the granary, Hugh, the seller of corn, and others, afterwards removed from their offices by the Bishop of Worcester, carrying on their knaveries in the most unblushing and open manner.

All these and others feared nothing more than the election of an active person, who might be inclined to examine into their acts and correct their dishonest and indecent practices, so unbecoming the members of a religious house; so they secretly conspired to elect to the place of Abbot not either of those who expected it, but the laziest, most easy-tempered, inactive and ignorant member of the brotherhood; and upon Friar John Strete this enviable distinction fell.

But Friar John did not think—if he could be said to make the mental exertion of thinking at all—the distinction one so much to be coveted. The Abbacy of even St. Augustine's Monastery must be attended with some care and some little trouble, and he sighed when he recollected the sleepy luxury of his indolent life hitherto—his long afternoon naps on the porter's bench, and his loiterings in the Green—lest his new honour should interfere with his personal laziness. But then the picture had its bright side, too, and when the new Abbot recollected an extraordinary stock of fine Rhenish wine which the old one had left behind him, and the soft apartments and delicious pasties that appertained to the office, he was comforted, and the only effect the honour had upon him was that it made him take a stoop of wine the more on his going that evening to bed.

Things went on within the Monastery under their new head in the same glorious state of indolence and abuse as under the old; and Abbot John enjoyed his fat ease much in the same way as when he was Friar John: he was still to be seen in his favourite haunt in the Green, or dozing away the afternoon in the sun by the Abbey gatehouse, sometimes gossiping to a few of the old citizens who were wont to find their way up to this pleasant locality in the afternoon—sometimes talking to groups of children, of whom he was rather fond, and for whom he often ordered some scraps of pasty from the Refectory; for Abbot John, though so lazy and mightily loving his own ease, was not deficient in a kind of sleepy good nature.

But alas! the quiet life of the indolent Abbot, and the corruption

of the Abbey, were destined to be disturbed much sooner than either dreamt of or desired.

The report of the laxity and laziness of the House reached the Bishop of Worcester (in whose diocese it then was), and being an active and energetic man, he paid it a visit without any previous notice or intimation given. He arrived at the Abbey gate *incog.*, and in the course of the day, when the Abbot,

"As was his custom in the afternoon,"

adopted his usual seat on the porter's bench, a stranger took the liberty of seating himself beside him and interrupting his siesta by asking him various questions about the order and discipline of the House.

Abbot John was not annoyed at the impertinence of the unknown, but he wanted to sleep, so he cut short further interrogatories by saying, "Friend, I cavil not with thy curiosity, but thou hast chosen a bad season for gratifying it; for it is our custom to indulge in a short repose at this period of the day; so get thee to the buttery, and bid them from me find employment for thy teeth, for thy tongue goeth marvellously more trippingly than suiteth mine ease at the present." The stranger did as he was told.

"What's thy name and thy calling, fellow?" demanded the almoner, Friar Luke; "for thou makest thy request with as much confidence as if thou fanciest we cared here for thee or the Abbot's command?"

"My name is Arnold," replied the stranger," and my calling that of Bishop of Worcester; and before I return I will have taught thee and thy other graceless brothers to have more respect to the rules of thy order and the commands of thy Abbot. And to begin, I order thee to eat pulse and drink water (for thine impertinence) every Wednesday for the next twelve . . . .

For four or five days after this occurrence the fat Abbot was missed from his favourite haunts; he was to be seen neither in his rustic seat at the West end of the Green, nor at his chosen lounge on the porter's bench by the gatehouse. It was noised abroad too that the Bishop ef Worcester had arrived at the Monastery, and had discovered a world and all of abuses, wickedness, and wantonness, within its walls—that great changes were taking place, the drones being ejected, and discipline enforced. This was perfectly true, the poor Abbot himself being made the instrument of the Bishop's reforms. He was, in fact, as he expressed it himself, worn off his legs: the Bishop had him up early in the morning, round the Monastery and at matins, at an hour when before he had no notion of stirring out of bed: a dozen times in the day he panted for rest, but the indefatigable Arnold would give him none: he had him at business in the chapter-room when he wished to be at lunch in the refectory, and at prayers in the choir when he sighed to be asleep on the porter's bench. At length, the Bishop convinced himself that the Abbot's besetting faults were more those of omission than commission, and that he erred and allowed others to err through unconquerable indolence. It was ascertained, too, that he was not sufficiently instructed to propound the Word of God in common, so others were appointed to this duty in his stead.

This arrangement, which rather humoured the laziness than hurt the pride of the Abbot, together with others by which the management of the temporal affairs were devolved upon his chaplain, left Abbot John at leisure once more to enjoy his meat and his drink, his sleepy seat at the gatehouse, and his lazy loiter about the Green, and he fully availed himself of his recovered idleness. He lived ten years after the memorable visitation, and grew in size and (if possible) in indolence; was popularly known amongst the people and children without the monastery as the "*Fat Abbot*," and playfully named by his monastic brethren John *le Gros*.

At the termination of the ten years, however, one whole day passed over without the fat Abbot making his appearance, either at the gate-house or in the Green; and as the day was a glorious sunny one—just of that description on which the Abbot delighted to bask himself—the circumstance was the more alarming. A second and a third passed, and the Abbot was still missing from his usual haunts; and the old citizens returned without their evening's gossip, and the children without their pieces of pasty; and then it was seen how even the negative qualities of an easy temper and constitutional indolence may gain upon people, and all were sorry when they heard the fat Abbot, with whose well-known figure and accustomed habits they had been so long familiar, was very sick.

The fourth day his death was announced, or rather he slept out of life, as the Sub-Prior said, having only spoken once during his illness, and that was to request that his body would be interred, not within the monastic gloom of the Abbey, but on the site of the rustic chair at the west end of the Green (where he loved to sit), under the blessed canopy of heaven and the light covering of the verdant sod.

At the end of a week, during which his remains lay in state, his wish was complied with, and the Green was crowded to witness the singular sepulture. The procession issued from the north porch of the Abbey, chaunting a solemn hymn, and the remains of the fat Abbot were lowered into the earth. When the mould was thrown back upon the coffin, a young tree was planted above it, the fittest type, after all, of the fleeting succession of frail humanity.

> "Like leaves on trees the race of men is found,
> Now green in youth, now withered on the ground."

As the tree grew it inclosed the coffin in its roots, and drew such sustentation and nourishment from the decaying body of the fat Abbot, that, enriched by his remains, it soon surpassed all its sylvan neighbours, and became

> "In cold a shelter, and in heat a shade"

to future generations; always showing its leaves the first of the trees in the Green, and being at this moment a triumphant monument of the vegetative properties of a fat Abbot before the Reformation, as well as a proof of what landscape gardening has lost by the suppression of the monasteries.

THE MURDER OF THE ABBOT'S STEWARD.

Almondsbury and Leigh both belonged to the Abbey of Saint Augustine's, and in both the brotherhood had pleasant country houses. The former, which is a rich living, was attached to the bishopric on the suppression of the monastery, and was held almost invariably by the prelates of Bristol until the death of Dr. Monk, after which an independent appointment to the parish was made. The Rev. Murray Browne was the first for a very long time who not a bishop held the living. It was the favourite rural retreat of the earlier Abbots, who were no doubt attracted to it by its beauty and the richness of the soil. The record which suggested this story is found in the "Annal Wygorn," and is quoted by Barrett, from whom I copy it (p. 267). It is as follows :—

"James Barry, Abbot : he obtained the Royal Assent the 16th December following, nat. 22nd of Edward I. He governed twelve years, and died the 12th of November, 1306, and was buried under a marble on the south side of the rood altar. In 1299, going to Almondsbury late in the evening, many armed men entered suddenly, and broke in, and took away what the Abbot had there for his household, and killed his steward."

The evening was closing, and Abbot Barry walked restlessly up and down the large hall in his house, which was afterwards the Bishop's Palace, and burnt by the Bristol mob. The good man seemed much disturbed, as he muttered from time to time, "It is a hard necessity : but in this case leniency were a crime." At length the door, towards which he frequently looked, as he made his perturbed promenade of the apartment, opened, and a monk entered. The man approached the Abbot hesitatingly, and with a downcast look. For a moment or two neither spoke, but at length the Abbot said (and as he spoke distress and emotion were manifest in his tones), "Unhappy brother ! with prayer and penance I have sought the guidance of heaven in this painful matter—painful to me were you only a comparative stranger coming recently under my rule; but doubly painful when the culprit was the companion of my boyhood and the friend of my youth. Still, I have a duty to perform to this house and the cause of religion, which puts aside all human feeling, and God and my conscience tell me I have no other course but to forbid your further stay in our monastery. Go hence, and go in peace, if your crime, which may still be forgiven when fully repented of, can permit you to have peace."

"Surely, surely," said the monk, casting himself on his knees, and passionately laying hold on the Abbot's cassock, "you would not act with such cruelty, and cast me forth on the world upon a false charge ?"

"Not false, not false," replied the Abbot. "Add not untruth to incontinency. Confronted with the wretched woman, the partner of your guilt, you could not deny it "

"Then by our early friendship, I implore you to forgive me. Exercise that clemency which is a divine attribute—"

"And sacrifice justice and duty," interrupted the Abbot ; "No, if you were my own brother, I could not overlook it. The state of this house—its general laxity, and the dissoluteness of some of its members, demand an example, and I must make one. John

Selwyn, you are no longer a Black Canon of the order of Saint Victor: depart hence!"

"Depart hence?" exclaimed the monk, repeating the words with something like a shriek, and rising from his knees; "If I must depart I must; but William Barry, as man or abbot, you will rue this tyranny. Bear in mind that I have said it."

Sternly the Abbot answered, "John Selwyn, I weep for your sin and mourn over your fall, but I care not for your menace. Let me never see your face again until you have by penance and mortification earned the pardon of heaven!" and the Abbot turned away, while the monk slowly left the room.

. . . . . .

"Here they come," said one of two men, who stood at the time on the hill which overlooked the church and the abbatical country house of Almondsbury, and (further off) the broad waters of the Severn. Both men gazed in the direction of Bristol, and approaching by that road beheld a cavalcade of some six persons, whose appearance was perfectly pacific. First, on a jennet, rode Abbot Barry, in such travelling dress as became the churchman of his day; by his side was the Sub-Prior of St. Augustine's; a little in his rear rode his steward, and three lay servants of the monastery with sumpter mules followed.

As the party drew near, one of the two men by whom they were first descried disappeared amongst some trees, and left his companion, who instantly squatted on the road, and assumed the posture and appearance of a mendicant pilgrim.

"How glorious, brother!" exclaimed the Abbot to the Sub-Prior, as they cleared the curve in the road, and the magnificent prospect from Almondsbury-hill, which to this day makes the traveller loiter and look about him, broke upon their view. The works of man decay and change, but the course of time makes few alterations in the face of nature. In the landscape as it then was and now is, little difference could be discerned. Nothing, it is true, of the abbatical residence, but the site is known; the old church, however, still stands almost as it then stood: the eye overlooks the same expanse of rich land stretching down to the river, and that noble river, as it then glistened in the setting sun, offered the same glorious object to the eye as it now does on many an autumn evening.

The Abbot reined in his jennet, and gazed rapturously and thoughtfully round him. "Pleasant as our good house of St. Augustine at Bristol is, brother," said he, after a pause, to the Sub-Prior, "I never behold this landscape that I do not wish that choir, and cloisters, and refectory were all transferred to the spot on which we stand, if it were only to behold such sunsets as these. Our vesper bell would sound sweetly to the boatmen on yonder Severn, and our lauds be heard by the early rising shepherd."

"Charity, holy father!" said the mendicant, whining his petition from the road side.

The Abbot waved his hand in benediction, and ordered the steward to let the man have a dole from the baskets of the sumpter mule.

"Rather let me have a night's lodging, holy father," implored the man; "I am foot weary, and the evening is so far advanced that I cannot reach other shelter ere it be dark."

His prayer was granted, and he followed the cavalcade as it wound down the hill to the Abbot's Lodge. After his household had retired to rest, the Abbot still stood in the deep recess of the oriel window that looked towards the Severn. The landscape, which the setting sun had gilded, was now silvered over with moonlight, and the Abbot, whose eye for the picturesque and poetical a long conventual life had not dimmed, contemplated the scene with silent prayerful rapture. There were circumstances, too, which rendered him, perhaps, still more susceptible to the grateful influence of the hour in that particular place. Though now a mitred Abbot, reigning over a house of large power and possessions, he saw on the other side of that river, which slept in the moonlight like a broad sheet of silver, the scene of his lowly and humble home; and if for a moment he felt the flush of exultation in the elevation he had achieved, there was also a cast of sadness when he thought of the cause which sent him forth from his rustic home. If, as it was said, it was the death of a loved wife that first induced him to seek in a cloister the peace which the world cannot give, he had often perhaps since felt that, though lord of an abbey, surrounded by serfs and vassals, there was in the domestic love of a Severn-side shepherd's home, a warmth and charm that no solitary grandeur could give. But he had long trained himself to dismiss these thoughts as quickly as they rose, and he now tried to fix his attention upon a subject which more concerned his duty and circumstances as superior of the brotherhood of the Black Canons of the order of St. Victor. Sundry irregularities, glanced at in his parting and painful interview with John Selwyn (known to his monastic brethren as John of the Granary), had recently come to light. Discipline had been relaxed during the reigns of one or two feeble predecessors, and to enforce order and morality he had been obliged to make some severe examples, such as that just referred to, when he had been compelled to send forth one whom he had known from boyhood a disgraced outcast. But these examples had not deterred from similar errors other members of the brotherhood: new cases had come under his notice, and he began to think that while their house was so close to the crowd and vices and luxuries of a great town, which offered not merely temptations but facilities for irregularity on the part of the weaker brethren, neither the piety nor reputation of the monastery could be preserved. What he said to the Sub-Prior, about wishing that the Abbey of St. Augustine's stood on the hill of Almondsbury, was therefore only the inkling of a plan he had some time meditated for having the monastery transferred to the latter place, or Leigh.

His thoughts, however, were cut short by hearing some one stealthily enter the room, and on turning round he saw his steward, whose face wore a ghastly whiteness. "Holy father," gasped he, in a whisper, "armed burglars are in possession of the house. Hark!"

The crash, as of a door broken through, was heard, and the Abbot, whose monastic life had not extinguished in his heart the early courage of the Severn-side shepherd, acting on the impulse of native spirit, was about to rush forward in the direction of the noise, when the steward begged him to be cautious. "Your own sacred life, holy father, I believe, is the object of this outrage; for, passing along the corridor, I looked in to seek the aid of the pilgrim, to whom you this evening afforded a shelter, and found his cell empty; and am now convinced, upon recollecting his voice, that in the disguised mendicant, you have afforded the shelter of this roof to the expelled brother John of the Granary, who left the monastery with a menace against your life."

"Then I will confront him," he dauntlessly exclaimed, "for in what better cause could Abbot lose his life than in enforcing the discipline of God's house?"

Hardly had he uttered the word, when a loud noise was heard from the domestics' quarter, and presently, in an affrighted band and crying for help, the terrified servants burst into the room, pursued by several fierce armed ruffians.

His steward was struck down by the Abbot's side, and by the hand of the outcast monk. With sinews that had not grown old, and a courage which a life of religious discipline appeared to have only elevated and inspired, the Abbot sprung at the ringleader, and flung him violently to the ground, when the servants, fired by their lord's example, closed with the others, and a terrific hand to hand struggle commenced. In mortal grip-and-grip midnight conflicts of this kind few are the words spoken; a muttered malediction, as, locked in one another's hold, servants and robbers exerted every sinew, the one for life and the other for mastery, was the only sound heard. The shadow in which they fought prevented the ruffians from making efficient use of their arms, and sometimes when they struck out, their own comrades, in the confusion of the melee, received the blows. But list! some one of the servants, disentangling himself from the conflict, has reached the alarm bell, and over the midnight landscape its loud and hurried tones are heard. Rapid and ringing, it swings its voice far around in the silence of the scene to the banks of the Severn. The folded sheep start up and listen trembling to the sounds; and the wakeful shepherd with his dog on watch hear it, while it arouses the peasants slumbering in the hamlets around; but to none was it more distinct or heard with such different feelings as by those who maintained a life and death struggle in that old abbatical parlour. The robbers knew that, in a few minutes, it would draw a band of peasants from the adjoining cottages to the rescue, and, making a terrific effort, they threw off their antagonists and escaped from the house.

When the peasants arrived, they found the Abbot surrounded by his domestics, and, all kneeling, were giving thanks to God for their deliverance. On raising the body of the steward, it was found that life was extinct, and his remains were next day interred close by the priests' door of Almondsbury Church.

AN OLD TOWN AND GOWN ROW, WRESTLING MAYORS, AND FIGHTING ABBOTS.

1527—This yeare, at St. James's tide, as the Mayor (Thomas Brooke) and his brethren came from wrastling.—*Mayor's Kalendar.*

It was during the abbacy of Somerset (1527), the disputes between the canons of Saint Augustine and the townspeople of Bristol were renewed. Two of the choristers of the Abbey refusing to pay the King's silver, distresses were levied on them. The Abbot, taking part with his servants, arrested the officers who exercised their functions within his jurisdiction. The Mayor and Commonalty retaliated, and imprisoned the retainers of the Abbey. The Abbot, with a powerful body, attempted to rescue his men, but suffered a repulse.—*Britton's Brist. Cath., p.* 22.

"Hurrah for the Mayor! well done, Worshipful Master Brooke," shouted out the crowd assembled on the Marsh, to witness the usual evening's amusements, which took place there when the Commonalty of Bristol and its Municipal Chiefs met to recreate themselves with manly sports, after the day's business.

These exclamations were an outburst of admiration on the part of the spectators, as they saw their stalwart Mayor, after a keen struggle of some minutes, with toe and wrist, suddenly take his antagonist, one William Herbert, a noted Welsh wrestler, and capsize him with one of those feats of strength which has since been called a cross-buttock. Cheer followed upon cheer, as the athletic honour of Bristol was so featly and gallantly asserted over Welsh braggadocia. And hurrah for the Mayor, say we. Hurrah for the time when civic Magnates, instead of stuffing themselves with venison pasties and Rhenish wines, which they learnt to do in an age or two afterwards, turned out in the evening for healthy exercise, and the Mayor and the senior Alderman tried a fall together and bore no malice afterwards.

"Now," said Master Brooke, wiping his forehead with a handkerchief, and good humouredly regarding his discomfited antagonist as he rose from the ground: "Now, I think I may have a pull at the tankard." And, gracious me! did not his Worship have a pull! It was a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether, as the Senior Alderman thought, who was waiting for the reversion of the tankard, and who fancied his Worship would never take the vessel from his mouth. But his Worship was as thirsty as he was strong; so, having finished the liquor, he turned the tankard over, and, laughing at the Alderman, whose face grew long and lugubrious to find there was not a mouthful left for him, said "there was a hole in the vessel, and he could not help it leaking."

"But what is the matter with these white-faced fellows?" asked his Worship, glancing at two of the city officers, who had just arrived with their noses bloody and their doublets torn, and looking as scared as the man who drew Priam's curtain at the dead of night.

Their story was quickly told: they were two of a party that had gone to levy distresses on a couple of the choristers of St. Augustine's

Abbey, who had refused to pay the King's silver. On their seizing the singing-men, however, Abbot Somerset made his appearance, in a towering rage, that his ecclesiastical jurisdiction should be invaded by the civic power, and, calling his retainers together, rescued the choristers; and, on the officers resisting, seized some of them, and thrust them into the Abbey dungeon, while the only two that escaped rushed off to the wrestling ground, and informed the Mayor of this overt act of war between Church and State.

Talk of Church-rate contests in modern times, the scene that followed the intelligence of the two discomfited officers eclipsed anything we know aught of. The authority of the monasteries and the monks was just at this time beginning to wane. Cardinal Wolsey was meditating a scheme (as we learn from the letter of Fox, Bishop of Winchester), to reform or remodel these dissolute and drowsy establishments, and the people were beginning to know and canvass their proceedings. The civic bodies especially—whose commercial members possessed far more intelligence than the rural population—did not scruple to contest many points of local right and jurisdiction with them; and about the same time that the occurrence here referred to took place, the Mayor and Commonalty of Bristol successfully defied and resisted the claim of the Prior of St. John of Jerusalem in England to retain, against the civil officers, the privilege of sanctuary in Temple Street.

Abbot Somerset knew a little of the growing free temper of the times, and this knowledge made him the more irate at what he called the encroachment of the lay-bailiffs upon the Abbey grounds, even though in pursuit of church defaulters. So he thought he'd stop it—put an end to civil impertinence once and for all. Abbot Somerset was pluck to the backbone, but he met his match in Mayor Brooke. "What," cried his Worship, drawing on his doublet, and tightening the points of his hose, "after our hard wrestling match—to be beaten by shaved heads—our officers ducked and imprisoned. Oh, since that is the game two can play at it! Come along, my masters!"

And Mayor Brooke, and the Aldermen, and the Councilmen, and the crowd, who then as now loved a row, hurried from the Marsh across the drawbridge, and away to the Abbey gate, up to a fight on anything. The movement was so sudden, that the porters and some other retainers, who were loitering by the great Norman entrance, had not time to secure their retreat or the gateway, when Mayor Brooke had bound one of them, and the Aldermen seized a couple more, and dragged the fellows off with them, as hostages for their imprisoned officers. The cries of the captives soon alarmed the Abbey, and out came Abbot Somerset, with a strong force of followers. "Stop," you cowardly kidnappers—you greasy, bullying burgesses!" cried the Abbot. "Brooke, you great bear, I'll teach you to respect the rights of the Church."

The Mayor and his party made a stand. "Since I am a bear, then come and bait me," cried his Worship. The Abbot took him at his word, and was at grips with the worthy Chief Magistrate in a moment, while the others on both sides went hard at it It was a stiff tussle between the Mayor and the Abbot, for the head of St.

Augustine's was then as stalwart as the present Chief of the Chapter,* but the layman was in better wind, and after two or three minutes' struggle, the venison pasties and the want of exercise began to tell upon the Very Rev. the Abbot. In brief, his reverence was blown, and his followers, seeing him give up the contest, fought shy—the game was over, *red* won, *black* lost, and with a cheer the laymen made good their retreat to the city, carrying with them the Abbey retainers, whom the Abbot was unable to rescue.

It was one of the earliest fights in Bristol between Church and State—the sacerdotal and the civic—in which the latter won the day. Thanks to a bustling Mayor and a Town Council, who took more exercise than turtle.

The sequel and upshot of this pugnacious civic and ecclesiastical passage of arms is told as follows in Britton's history, and in the same page from which the passage given at top is taken :—

> After spending large sums in legal proceedings, the dispute went to arbitration, when it was decided that the choristers should pay their taxes, that the prisoners of each party should be released, that the Mayor and Council should attend Divine service in the College as usual, and that the Abbot and his successors, in token of submission for contempt, should thenceforth, upon every Easter Day, in the afternoon, and Easter Monday, in the forenoon, meet or wait for them at the door of the Grammar School at Froom Gate, and accompany them to College.

It was humiliating enough, I dare say, for a proud, plucky Churchman, like Abbot Somerset, to thus knock under. But he could not help himself. The times and intelligence were against him. The same old battle of civil freedom against sacerdotal assumption has been often since fought with varying effect and in different tempers ; but let us drink a health to the stout Bristol Mayor, who was amongst the first to take a fall out of a powerful priest, and have the best in a stand-up contest with monks and monkery.

THE LAST OF THE ABBOTS.

Morgan Guilliam, ap Guilliam, elected 1537, being the last Abbot ; he surrendered his monastery into King Henry VIII.'s hands the 9th of December, 1539, and obtained a pension of £80 per annum for life. In Fuller and Speed's History he is charged with keeping six lewd women, but it is thought without very good evidence. These and worse crimes were imputed to the Monks, as a strong and plausible excuse for dissolving their houses. The following account appears entered in the book of pensions on the date of the King's commission, which has this entry, dated December 9th, 31st Henry VIII., 1539—

> First, To Morgan Guilliam, late Abbot there, with the mansion place of Lee [that is Abbot's Leigh], the garden, orchard, and dove house to the same adjoining and yielding ; and also 20 loads of fyer wood yearly, to be perceyved and taken out of the wood of the same manor by the assignment of the King's Highness's surveyor or

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* Dean Elliot, a specimen in younger days of a fine muscular Churchman.

keeper there, during his life, without anything yielding or paying for the same	£80	0	0
Item to Humfrey Hicman, late Prior there	8	0	0
John Restal	8	0	0
John Careye	6	13	4
Nicholas Corbett	6	13	4
Henry Pavye	6	0	0
William Wrington	6	0	0
William Underwood	6	0	0
Richard Hill	6	0	0
Richard Orrell	6	0	0
Richard Sterley	6	0	0
Richard Hughes	6	0	0
Sum	£151	6	8

Dull and dreary dawned the December morning over the ancient house of St. Augustine, for this was to be the day of its dissolution. Before noon its brotherhood were to be dispersed upon the world, and to turn their backs for ever on groined roofs and Gothic walls which had afforded shelter for centuries to a religious fraternity. The whole abbey wore the appearance of its impending doom. No grateful odour proceeded from the great kitchen; the buttery-hatch was opened for the last time to admit their meagre breakfast; the refectory was cold, and the wood-fire in its spacious hearth was quenched; the almoner's place was empty, though one poor pilgrim, uninformed of the fact, had attended for his dole; the dormitory no longer presented its orderly appearance, but was strewed with scrip and sac in which the brotherhood had put away their few articles of apparel previous to departure, while over court and cloister reigned an air of silence and sadness, which was quite depressing. Nevertheless, the brotherhood were in their choir. It was the last time their voices were to be raised together in prayer under the cope of their ancient church, and never before perhaps was there a morning service in that place whereat there was so much of feeling and of touching reverence. Every heart was subdued and every voice affected by the impression that they were then worshipping for the last time within those old walls, and there was a plaintive and tremulous pathos in every tone as the solemn melody of the "Veni Creator Spiritus" rose from that little congregation. They had been dominant and over-bearing and irreverent at times in their prosperity and power; but now all subdued and humbled in their adversity, there was something of heroic and holy submission to the will of Heaven and the hand of Man in their resignation, which seemed to gild the last hour of their brotherhood, and disarm that exultation which one might otherwise feel in their doom.

The service ended silently and sorrowfully the brotherhood filed from the choir, each turning to take a last look of the familiar retrospect of pillar and aisle and arch, as he passed out at the southern portal, which led to the domestic offices.

At noon, with scrip and sack buckled on their shoulders, and prepared each for his own road, the brotherhood awaited in the cloisters the arrival of the commissioners into whose hands the Abbot was to deliver up the keys of the abbey, its possessions and appurtenances. Nor had they to bide long—the King's servants

made their appearance while the abbey bell was still tolling the appointed hour.

"Gentlemen," said the Abbot, with a melancholy dignity which seemed to suit the occasion, "into your hands, as the commissioners of my liege Lord the King, I deliver these keys. This is the last official act and deed of Morgan Gwilliam ap Gwilliam, the last Abbot of St Augustine's. You have my benediction and my forgiveness, though you might have permitted an old man to lay down his mitre from a brow unstigmatised by scandal!"

As the retiring brotherhood passed out through the great gateway, a crowd had collected to witness their departure; but no expression of obloquy or commiseration escaped from their lips; silently and almost sadly they saw them pass, or bowed their heads as the old Abbot motioned his benediction towards them. The spectators watched them till they were out of view, and then were about to disperse, when a grave man amongst those nearest to the gateway, said, still looking in the direction the monks had taken, "Farewell, fosterers of a false system! The day is gloomy, and there is that to excite pity in the breaking up of an old house, and the desolation and solitude which even now seem to settle on these ancient walls; but this dark day is after all but the dawn of a new and noble intelligence, and these altars are only quenched for a moment to be relumed with a purer and a brighter flame."

The speaker delivered these words with a prophetic confidence, and his speech was listened to by those around with the same serious silence as that with which they had seen the monks depart.

The Abbot alone, of all the brotherhood, rode. At a short distance from the abbey, and removed from view, they took an affecting leave of one another, and then dispersed each to his own destination. Abbot Gwilliam took the road to Leigh, the retirement allotted to him by the King's commissioners. From the top of Rownham Hill, overlooking the ferry, he paused to glance back on the Old Abbey precincts, when suddenly he heard its well known peal break out in merry chimes. It was the celebration, and he knew it, of their expulsion. He did not wait to listen longer, and turned not again until the mansion place of Lee, its orchard, garden, and dove-cot broke upon his view. And in this quaint retirement the last of the Abbots of St. Augustine "fell asleep," about a year subsequently to the suppression of his house; and with him ended the local order, as it does "The Chronicles, of the Black Canons of St. Victor."

Canynges' Wife and the Elixir.

[Thomas Norton, the alchymist, was born at Bristol, and was amongst the men of note in Edward the Fourth's time. Fuller in his "Worthies," says of this Thomas Norton, "that he boasted himself to be so great a proficient in chemistry, that he learned it to perfection in 40 days, when he was twenty-eight years old, and complaineth that a merchant's wife in Bristol stole from him the Elixir of Health, suspected to be the wife of William Cannings, of Bristol (contemporary with Norton) who started up into such great wealth and so suddenly, the clearest evidence of this conjecture." It is said that Norton, in his foolish and infatuated pursuit of the Philosopher's stone, ruined himself and those who trusted him with their money, and died in poverty in 1477.

For the retirement of William Canynges, the completer, if not the founder of Redcliff Church, a curious reason is assigned in the Records of Bristol—namely, that he took upon himself the profession of the priesthood to avoid taking a second wife, which King Edward the Fourth would have fain compelled him to do.

I should be sorry wantonly to destroy or dissipate the beautiful romance which hangs over this passage in the history of the peerless Canynges, and which is a precedent as it stands to all widowers. To espouse a monastic life rather than enter on a second marriage merely from the love he bore the memory of his first affianced, is a degree of conjugal devotion we never witness in these days. Truth must, nevertheless, be told; and I have it from a MS. under the fist of the famous Tom Rowley, that it was not so much love for his first wife as fear of a second, that made Master Canynges fly for refuge to the friendly sanctuary of Westbury College.

In fact, the first Mistress Canynges was of so quick a temper, and led her husband a life of such domestic unrest, that there was nothing he more dreaded than getting another of the same nature and tendency, and he willingly surrendered the gain and ambition of a merchant's life and the excitement of civic honours, and entered into a convent sooner than run a second risk.

In the recorded list of the great merchant's ships, there is one called the Mary Canynges, of 400 tons, named after his wife, and another, the Mary Batt, of 220, named after a young lady who was his first love, but refused his first, and, unfortunately, his *only* offer. This was a circumstance known but to Canynges and the maiden herself, but both lived to regret a rupture caused by coquetry on the one hand, and precipitancy on the other. In saying "no" to the first proposition of the rich merchant, Mistress Batt fully expected he would have given her another opportunity of saying "yes" to his second, as her negative was only meant to punish what she thought too apparent a confidence on his part. She liked him, but fancied he relied too much on his riches in paying his addresses, and she wished, as the saying is, "to take him

down a peg." He, however, was unfortunately only too prompt in taking "no" for answer. He had no notion that his addresses would be so received; his pride was hurt, and, in his surprise and mortification, he did that which many do, and most regret—offered for another, and was accepted.

If his object were to mortify Mistress Batt, he succeeded; and perhaps the young lady deserved it for her foolishness: but the unfortunate part of it was that, in punishing her he punished himself also. She lost a good husband, and he got a quick-tempered wife—a brief history, from which a moral may be drawn—a warning to young ladies not to say "no" when they don't mean it, and to young gentlemen not to be above trying again; for two negatives, in affairs of the heart, as in English, sometimes lead to an affirmative.

William Canynges was not long married before he made two discoveries—neither of them very satisfactory—namely, that had he asked Mistress Batt a second time she would have had him, and that it would have greatly conduced to his comfort had he never asked his present wife even once. Amongst other qualifications, Mrs. Canynges might be called a blue-stocking—or anything synonymous to a term unknown in her time. She did not, it is true, spend all her days devouring three-volume novels, because there were no novels in her days to devour, but those which went with the pandects of Justinian, and were too tough for a lady's taste; but she was a devout believer and amateur in alchymy, a science at that period earnestly studied and ardently believed in by numbers.

As if to feed this infatuation, not far from Canynges' house lived Thomas Norton, who had a name all over the city for rare subtlety in such matters, and was frequently a visitor at the house of his rich neighbour, who took pleasure in his company, not on account of his alchymy but for his general intelligence. Norton, unlike many of the quacks of the crucible in his time, believed what he taught: and, such was his enthusiasm, that at moments he almost succeeded in infecting Canynges with a credulity in the alkahest or universal menstruum, the universal solvent, the philosopher's stone, or the elixir of life. Indeed, he so far prevailed upon the sound-headed merchant as to induce him to lend him money to enable him to carry out his experiments. And let us not wonder at this: for how many so-called sensible men have, in our own days, advanced their hard-earned savings, the painful accumulations of an age of industry, on projects hardly more sane or less illusory than the philosopher's stone. A man might, with as much pretence to common sense, have believed in the universal *solvent* as in the universal solvency of the railway schemes and bubble companies that crowded the kingdom in the course of '45.

Nevertheless, William Canynges grew rich: and as he grew rich, rose in beauty the structure of St. Mary Redcliff. The citizens, who knew of his intimacy with Thomas Norton, said it was all attributable to the alchymist that he waxed affluent so fast, and some kindly hinted that he only built the church to conceal his commerce with the devil. Thomas Norton, in the meantime, throve by the illusion, for people thought that if he could communicate the golden

secret to Master Canynges, he could communicate it to them, and paid him accordingly.

"You grow wealthy as a Prince, good Master Canynges," said his next richest and most envious neighbour, one morning accosting him on Redcliff Wharf. "Is it true that you have discovered the grand secret?" "Yes," was Canynges' quick reply; "the grand secret of growing rich is to be honest, to be industrious, and avoid envy, and, above all, to give to God a portion of your gains. Look yonder," said he, and he pointed to the rising fabric of St. Mary Redcliff, around whose scaffolded walls hundreds of workmen were employed as busily as a hive of bees. "Every stone in that has been to me a philosopher's stone, and with every course of masonry in that fabric have risen my fortunes. The blessing of Heaven is the grand secret, and the blessing of Heaven will only rest upon him who does his duty upon earth. If you would be rich then, as I am, trouble not your head with dreams of alchymy, but go and do likewise; build, repair, or restore a church, and you will be sure to find the philosopher's stone amongst the materials of your pious munificence!"

Such was the speech of the great and generous merchant of St. Mary Redcliff. It was lately found in the muniment chest of the church, having escaped the research of Chatterton, and is about being published for general circulation by the Canynges' Society.

While the good merchant was engaged in his great work of church building, his wife was not less intent on alchymy: not being content with merely listening to the heated recitals of Norton, but frequently following him to his laboratory, where amid the works of Geber, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Roger Bacon, and others, he toiled and toiled in the vain effort of discovering the elixir. It was this secret that inflamed the curiosity and cupidity of Mistress Canynges. The wealth of her husband left nothing to desire in the shape of gold, and there was nothing that gold could purchase for her, but a good temper, that he did not buy. The philosopher's stone was, therefore, to her an object of secondary interest; it was the elixir that was to keep age and disease away that she so earnestly desired, and it was upon this Thomas Norton was most earnestly intent. He would, therefore, have willingly dispensed with her company, as he had no wish to share the secret with her; but the wife of his rich patron was not to be discourteously treated, even though wicked people spoke maliciously, and wags talked of "the horns of the altar" the rich merchant was raising.

Norton's notion of the elixir was to find out all the specifics that were known, thinking that if a specific could be found for every disease a compound of them all would prove a specific for the cure of all diseases, not knowing or thinking that there were many ingredients of which the character or virtues are neutralized or destroyed by composition. Nevertheless, he laboured on, and Mistress Canynges was more than ever the companion of his labours, until at length he announced the completion of his great work, and emptied into a bottle his precious elixir!

Brief was his triumph, however, for on visiting his laboratory

next morning it was gone. He immediately rushed to his neighbour's, and charged Mistress Canynges with being the purloiner of the super-precious discovery. She alone knew where it was—she had been with himself the last in the laboratory. But Mistress Canynges having had the resolution to commit the theft, had the fortitude to keep her own secret.

Much as the ill-fated Norton and his fellow-citizens lamented the loss of this rich treasure at the critical moment of its completion, poor Master Canynges, if he did not deplore the course events had taken, was most to be pitied in the matter. Many a time, when his wife's temper appeared intolerable, did he console himself with the hardly confessed thought that she could not live for ever, and might afford him an opportunity of carrying out his favourite fancy of a monastic retirement in the evening of life; but if she had now got possession of the Elixir there was no hope for him—she had an immortality of ill temper before her, to teaze him and a hundred husbands more.

. . . . . .

The works of St. Mary Redcliff are suspended—the bells are tolling from the unfinished tower, and William Canynges walks chief mourner in a procession that paces slowly across the churchyard. The elixir has failed to keep Mistress Canynges alive, and hear the story of her death as told by two spectators who stood by the south porch.

"Afraid,' said one, "that he would not leave her money enough to last out the long life she thought was before her, she tried to induce her husband to abandon the great work of building this church, that he might have the more to leave her. He refused for a time, but there is no knowing how far her tears, temper, and entreaties, might have succeeded, had not the excess of her passion suddenly brought on a fit. She had recourse to her elixir: there was the bottle, but St. Mary, whom she would have deprived of a blessed fabric, had dried up the contents."

CANYNGE'S CHOICE.

A Story of Bristol in the time of Edward IV.

"1466-7, This Mayor (William Cannings) having buried his wyfe, whom he dearly loved, was moved by King Edward to marry another wyfe, whom he had ordained; but Mr Cannynge, as soon as he had discharged his year of Mayoralty, to prevent it took on him the order of priesthood, and sung his first mass on Whitsunday, at the Ladye Chapple at Redcliffe, and was afterwards Dean of Westbury, which college by Richard Duke of York and Edward Earl of Rutland was founded, and a Dean and Canons placed therein."—*From a private Manuscript quoted by Barrett.*

"1466, To ROWLEY.—Lyfe ys a sheelde where ne tyncture of joie or tene haveth preheminence. Kynge Edwarde yesterdaie dyd feeste at mie rudde house, goeynge ynne the boate uponne the tyde. Cannynge quod

he, I haveth a wife for thee of noble house. Mie liege, quod I, I am oulde and need not a wyfe. Bie oure Ladie, quod he, you moste have one. I saide ne more, bethynkynge ytt a jeste, butte I now unkeven ytte ys a trouthe: come to mee and arede mee, for I wylle ne be wedded for anie kynge.—W. C."—*From the Rowley Manuscripts.*

The gay, daring, splendid, but dissolute Edward, had been staying in Bristol for two days, and the whole central city during that period had been literally echoing and alive night and day with banquetting and riot, the king and his courtiers being both equally energetic in these dissipations. But on the morning from which this sketch is drawn, the noise and festive rejoicing had in a great measure converged to the Redcliff side of the river, as it was known that the monarch meant that day to visit the Mayor, William Canynge (then for the sixth time filling the curule chair of Bristol), at his mansion, by the new and splendid church which remains to this day a monument of its founder's munificence.

Edward held Court at the Castle, and it was announced to be his intention to proceed by water to a point nearest to the Mayor's residence at Redcliff, which he meant to honour with his presence about noon. At an early hour the royal barge, splendidly decorated with the regal arms and the white rose of York blazoned on a gorgeous silk flag which fluttered from the stern, was seen moored by the water-gate of the Castle, and close by were a number of boats less splendid, though still of goodly show, meant to convey his courtiers and guards. The good folks of Bristol were then as now fond of a sight; and as the river pageant was expected to be "a brave and dainty one," to use the parlance of the times, the banks all along at either side were occupied by crowds, amongst whom might be seen substantial burghers and their well-dressed wives and daughters, for full two hours before the time appointed for the royal passage.

Noon had now arrived, but Edward still lingered in the Castle. It was said that the fair Rodal was in the royal presence; and as his attendants knew it was not his humour to be disturbed when such held audience, none cared to announce that the barge and courtiers waited. At length the King came forth and entered the royal boat, amidst the cheers that broke from the thousands piled up on the banks at either side, and a burst of martial music, which continued and kept time with the rowers as the pageant floated down on the ebbing tide.

"Hastings," said Edward to that nobleman, who stood by the monarch's seat in the barge, "is this Master Canynge, to whose house we are now proceeding, married?"

"He is a widower, sire," replied Hastings; "though his wealth would be a dower for the fairest dame at Court."

"And from the Court he shall have a wife, by our Lady!" exclaimed the King. "We are just now in want of a husband for one who grows troublesome: the fair Mistress Rodal waxes importunate and inconvenient, and we have resolved to apportion her to some loving spouse; and here comes Master Canynge opportunely to our hand."

"But, sire, the Mistress Rodal's name, in connection with gallantry and her gracious sovereign, is matter of some notoriety."

"And if so," interrupted Edward, "is not a king's discarded mistress a mate for a wealthy burgher, any day?"

Hastings did not dispute the point, and in a few minutes more the pageant arrived alongside the temporary wharf which had been prepared for the King's reception at Redcliff. Rich carpets were strewn along the path to which Edward had to pass to his charger, which was in waiting; and as he rode from the river bank to the Mayor's residence, the bells of St. Mary's—then a structure glistening in all the richness and glory of new carved freestone—rang merrily out, and the men of Redcliff made the welkin echo with their cheers, as the tall and handsome form of Edward (by whose side rode Canynge, bareheaded,) caught the eyes of the admiring thousands.

Nor did the gala rejoicings cease when Edward, conducted by Master Canynge to "his rude house," disappeared from the view of those without; for the peals kept up their music, the people feasted by the liberality of the Mayor, and flags and streamers floated, not merely from every point of the church, but from the sharp gables and the bay windows of the houses on that side of the Avon.

The banquet which Canynge had prepared for his sovereign was worthy the wealth, state, and station of the entertainer; and the King and his courtiers seemed to enjoy it with all the wild and hilarous temper of the times. Canynge, too, entered into the excitement of the hour in what would be termed, in these days, a boisterous spirit of hospitality. He challenged the courtiers and the company to empty bumper after bumper to the royal health; and his voice was ever and anon heard calling to his attendants to place fresh beakers of wine and confections on the board. But there were moments when his eye caught sight of the church yonder through the oriel window of the grand banqueting hall in which they were, and then a sad melancholy cast of thought would for a moment overshadow his face. It might seem to the casual observer that the sight of that splendid and solemn pile, raised by his own piety to the service of Heaven, awakened in a heart, naturally religious, feelings and emotions superior to the scene of splendid riot in which they were then engaged. But had one gone deeper into his thoughts, they would find that the recollection of his beloved wife, who rested in "cold obstruction's apathy," beneath the groined roof of that glorious fabric, it was that created Canynge's momentary sadness in the midst of so much festivity. But these feelings were quickly mastered; and so well did the widower Mayor play the host, that it was night ere the King and Court rose to depart; and then Edward thanked his entertainer for the brave and goodly feast and carouse he had given them.

Edward, as he re-embarked to return to the Castle, commanded Canynge to enter the royal barge with him—a sign of kingly favour to which he could not say nay.

As the barges glided along the river, a glare of torches, held by innumerable hands on either bank, lit up the water with a thousand reflections, and the music of the returning revellers sounded more brilliant and louder than ever. Canynge's eye, however, turned

to the splendid church of St. Mary, which looked down upon them in solemn tranquillity from the eminence on their right. The moon bathed it, spire and battlement and pointed porch, with a soft light, and it really seemed, in its holy beauty and mellowed majesty, to, as it were, rebuke the evanescent frivolity and fleeting character of the royal pageant.

So at least it appeared to the reflecting and serious-minded Canynge, whose thoughts now passed from the royal barge and the royal revellers, and the glancing torches, and the music and the cheering on the banks, to the interior of that solemn pile and to the canopied recess upon which the moonbeams, streaming in through the deep mullioned windows, were now resting, and which contained the remains of all that he held dear—the first love and only wife of his heart. From the church his eyes turned to the calm night sky and stars above him, and associating the spirit of her whom he had lost with the pure lights that shone serenely above him, his feelings involuntarily relieved themselves in a deep sigh.

The King heard it. "What! sad-hearted after such a day, Master Canynge," exclaimed the dissolute Edward, in a tone of noisy badinage; "thou must marry, and I have a wife for thee of noble house. It suiteth not thee to be alone, and one of our brave Court dames will make thee sing instead of sigh."

The King could not have chosen a moment when his words would have more jarred upon Canynge's feelings. What! take a fine lady from a dissolute Court to supply the place in his heart which the very recollection of his sainted Mary, like a holy shadow, still filled. "My Liege," said he, in a tone of deep melancholy, "I am old, and need not a wife; I have been before mated, my Liege, and the memory of her whom I have lost will suffice to fill this poor heart until we meet in Heaven"

Edward paused, as if touched—all thoughtless though he was—with the solemn and mournful tone of the speaker. However, the recollection of Mistress Rodal, whom he had to provide with a husband, recurred to his mind, and Edward added in a voice which, coupled with the knowledge that the King was an imperious match-maker, alarmed Canynge, "By our lady, Master Canynge, but you must have one. If thou dost not know what is good for thee, we do."

Canynge saw it was necessary to parley with the gay tyrant; so affecting to defer to the King's judgment, he yet excused himself from an immediate compliance, by pleading the cares of office.

"Then when thy year is out thou shalt wed," observed the King, thinking he had gained his point. "As soon as ever," he added, laughing, "thou dost doff those gold links around thy neck, thou shalt don the pleasanter chains of Hymen."

The barge had now reached the Castle, and Canynge, with a fresh commendation from the King on his hospitality, and a joke about his future young wife, was dismissed from further attendance.

"No; Mary," exclaimed the Bristol merchant, as returning home full of sad thoughts, he paused by the still moonlight pile of Redcliff, "no second wife shall ever rest on this bosom where thy sweet head has been so often pillowed—no not for all the kings in

Europe." And, taking a key from his pocket, he entered the church through the little north-west portal. Canynge gazed around him on the hushed and awful scene. Portions of the grand structure were lit up by the mellowed glory of the moonbeams, while in other parts a deep spectral gloom seemed to lurk behind pier and arch and angle, and in the long shadows which they cast across the paved floor. No sound was heard, and yet the silence, the deep mysterious silence, seemed as it were an "audible hush," and, as the Bristol merchant stood by the tomb of his wife, his nature felt as it were sentient of some invisible presence. Yet there was no fear, but rather a holy awe in the heart of that devoted and pious man; his soul seemed to rise to and receive the sacred and lofty impressions of the hour and place. He looked up to the groined roof and the pure light that poured in through the north clerestory windows, and as he did so there was a rapt and holy devotion about his brow and eye that told of high and holy mental resolve.

"It is decided," he exclaimed, and, before the echoes of that one expression had traversed the long aisles, he knelt before the altar, and vowed the remainder of the poor life he had to spend in this world should be devoted to the service of God and the church. "No; sainted spirit of a loved wife," he continued, turning towards her tomb, "the bridal robe shall not again fall from those shoulders, which for the future shall wear only the hood and cassock." And with a mind relieved by the resolve, he left the silent Church.

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It was Whit Sunday, and half the people that crowded round the entrance to the Lady Chapel of St. Mary Redcliff could not gain admission.

"So," said one of those who vainly crushed to the little portal, "he has given up his ships and his brave galleots, and his merchandize, and become a shaven priest. Well, Heaven will reward his devotion."

"Yes," said a cynical looking person, "for choosing of two evils the least. He became a priest to avoid a wife."

"Hold thy malapert tongue, scoffer," said some one near. "Hush!" And the voice of William Canynge, tremulous with emotion, was heard chaunting his first mass within. The sacrifice had been made; and the Bristol merchant had given up the service of Mammon, and devoted the remainder of his life to God.

[There is a palpable contradiction in these two "Romances," but we cannot account for it.]

CANYNGES' REVERIE.

It was noontide; and a warm summer haze slept on the valley, the stretched from the spot where stood the walls of the Benedictine Convent of Westbury, to the hill of Kingsweston; a few

drowsy signs of life rose from the handful of cottages that nestled together on the west side of the monastery, and the lazy splash of the mill-wheel on the little river Trym, which glided quietly beneath the western battlements, could be heard by the solitary priest, who, missal in hand, paced the natural platform upon which the church of the convent stood. The priest suddenly paused in his slow promenade, and looked towards Bristol, from which the sound of bells was borne by the light breeze. The listener was William Canynges, now dean of Westbury College. No great time had elapsed since this quiet contemplative man, now clad in sacerdotal garments, was an active man of business and walked the streets by the church towers whence those chimes proceeded,—

Underneath the light he looked at, in among the throngs of men.

At no time did the voice of those distant bells reach him without awakening old memories and present sensations, which he thought it his duty, now that he had bid farewell to a world of gains and gettings, to the pursuit of profit and of civic power, to suppress for ever. Still they would come back unbidden; and in the retirement of that religious-house, situate in the peaceful landscape, passages of his former existence, of his history—domestic, mercantile or public—would recur to him. He had not filled five times the civic chair, without having mixed in scenes convivial not a few. He had been a magnate amongst his fellow-citizens; he had received a voluptuous court in his mansion in yonder city; he had attended the Parliament in London; he had been a guest in the halls of all the old guilds of Bristol; he had seen the sails of his little fleet of merchantmen unfurled to dry by Redcliff wharf; and on festive occasions, when those bells to which he now listened were rung, the gay flags of the little fleet were given to the wind. No wonder, then, when the old familiar sounds reached him, that fancy should sometimes play the truant and busy itself with guessing what they were now doing in the old and loved city; what new topic of those eventful times occupied at the moment the attention of the burghers; how fared it and how went it with municipal government, which he had so long led and—for this thought would force itself on the mind of the holy man, however he struggled against it—what the inhabitants might then be saying and thinking of William Canynges, once the rich merchant and munificent housekeeper, who had exchanged business and barter for the quiet life of the cloister? Even pleasant evenings with his old secretary Thomas Rowley, and his scientific friend Norton, the alchymist—to his notion still more forbidden memories — occasionally suggested themselves, and intruded on the seclusion of the homely Benedictines.

On this morning, however, the chimes of the great adjacent city, for which his ear had involuntarily learned to listen, awoke recollections far more affecting and interesting to the retired merchant than any we have mentioned. It was the anniversary of his marriage. Years and years ago, on just such a bright morning as this, he stood before the altar with his beloved bride, and both were united in the very church which his munificence had since enlarged and so gloriously embellished. Years and years ago these

same chimes' broke out from many church towers to celebrate the marriage of Bristol's first citizen; and, as hand in hand he led her from St. Mary's fane between the two lines of spectators and neighbours that formed a lane from the south porch to the churchyard gate, he heard with natural pride blessings breathe from every lip on him and her. After years of happiness she followed her children to the grave, and left him, a solitary man, to choose between the cloister and an infamous marriage which a dissolute King would have forced upon him.

In a tomb, in the south transept of the church where they were both made one, the ashes of the faithful wife lay, and in that tomb with her was buried all of earthly love or interest which the merchant priest ever entertained. To that tomb, now that those bells awoke in his heart the echoes of the marriage anniversary, his thoughts turned; and, oh! what an interval of domestic happiness and domestic incident lay between that long-removed wedding morning and the present moment, when, having bid farewell to the world, he stood, a widowed, childless priest, within the walls of a Benedictine Convent.

Gaily and merrily, to a young bridal pair and company, as marriage bells may sound, it is only in after years, when the bright couple of the sunny morning, touched with grey, are descending life's hill calmly together after intervening joys and trials, that these chimes, sounding as of old, and accidentally breaking upon the ear on the well remembered anniversary, have the touching effect with which time and interposing circumstances can alone invest them. What a host of events there were crowded in the space that lay between the bridal morning, to which Canynges's memory reverted, and that moment! In the happy and profuse household which he had given up for a monk's cell, and to which, almost under the shadow of the great church he had brought home his bride, two sons had been born to him, and the train of joyous domestics made merry at their christenings. From that same house he had three times gone forth a mourner, in after years, and followed, first his sons, and then his wife to the grave. Had all these whom death had taken from him been spared, had his household still remained unbroken, would his choice have been a convent, and would he have turned his back upon the duties which, as a father and a husband, he owed society and his family?

This was a question which Canynges, in the reverie which those anniversary chimes evoked, unconsciously asked himself. The scene out upon which his eye glanced suggested an answer. Beautiful as was the wooded landscape, the few objects of human life in the village at his feet and the valley that stretched out before him, which attracted his attention, spoke of want and suffering, and vice and ignorance. The long wars of the Roses that even then were not finished, had impoverished the land, had called the tiller from the soil to follow the pennon of his lord; and instead of the peaceful shepherd's pipe, the blast of war had been blown in every county. The one absorbing subject of that exterminating feud had banished all ideas of paternal government and prudent policy; and while the embattled hosts of York and

Lancaster were encountering each other, the peasantry and common people were falling back into barbarism, and feeling the acute privation ever attendant upon such a lawless state. From his elevated promenade Canynges could see for himself in the ill-tilled field, the crumbling hovel, and the ragged half-starved rustic, the signs of all this sad and sorrowful conflict; and suddenly, as if some momentary light flashed upon his mind, his conscience asked him if he was doing his duty in flying within a convent walls, when such a wide field of work lay outside them. He had already said to himself, that had his family survived they would have claims upon him, which would have rendered his retirement impossible; but was not there still the human family remaining, with claims upon his and every Christian man's exertion? And he asked himself whether a life of usefulness consisted in exertion for the physical and moral amelioration of the dwellers in those hovels upon which he looked down, and of the poor denizens in the crowded lanes and alleys of the rich city in which he had made his fortune, and to which he had bidden farewell, or in a life of dreamy inaction within convent walls, where the day's routine was only varied by matins, and lauds, and compline.

Canynges felt uncomfortable under this self-questioning; if he did not stand convicted within himself of something like selfishness in making choice of a dreamy and devotional ease, while from poverty and sin and suffering and ignorance without there came the call for benevolent action, and a field for untiring disinterested beneficent work held out employment for him and for all, and seemed to invite and beckon him away from his monastic privacy and inexertion.

As he was still debating these things most painfully in his mind, his friend and confessor, Bishop Carpenter, the rebuilder of Westbury convent, whose name is so intimately associated with that of the merchant prince and priest, approached Canynges unobserved, and awoke him from his reverie by the question "What mean these musings, brother?"*

Canynges, without any reserve, communicated to his personal confidant and spiritual director his thoughts and doubts.

"A device of the devil, brother," answered Carpenter, when the other had opened his mind to him, "one of the traps which the wily tempter has been setting for your soul. Satan fashions his lures according to the dispositions and the tendencies of those upon whom he would practise; and while he holds out pleasure for lovers of such, he would draw you back, my friend, into the world with temptation in the guise of benevolence. To wile you once more

* At this time (1447) William Canynges was a prosperous merchant with a large and still increasing income at his command; and there can be no doubt, from the close intimacy which for many years had existed between him and his Confessor, the Bishop, that he greatly assisted by his liberality in the work of re-erection. The architectural peculiarities of Westbury College, and much of its church, belong to the period to which these remarks refer; and I presume that after the prelate had commenced the buildings, his friend Canynges supplied him with ample funds for their completion. In this way the names of both individuals are connected with the College for the first time, both being regarded as the founders of the establishment by those who prefer the general statement of a fact to an investigation of its truth.—*Pryce's Canynges Family.*

into the crowded streets, the busy quays, the company of buyers and sellers, the convivial feastings, the worldly throng and hurry of yon great city, whose hum almost reaches us here, he knows it will not do to hold out riches or pleasure to William Canynges; but he would deceive you in the form of an angel of light, and in that form he beckons you to come down from these holy walls, to turn your back upon the house of prayer and to go once more into the world, under a pretence of benevolence and philanthropy. But do not be deceived; put the devil from you, though he accost you with so fair a face. Stand behind me, Satan—vade retro, Sathanas. Amen."

"I am rebuked," said the merchant priest in a tone of humility; for proud and authoritative though he was as the great citizen, to his spiritual director he was abjectly submissive. "I will go," he said, "to my cell, and pray against temptation."

"Go, in nomine Dei," said the Bishop; and Canynges walked slowly away, while Carpenter, with somewhat of a sinister expression, followed the retiring form of the merchant-priest, as, with drooped head he directed his steps to that part of the convent which he occupied.

"Ha!" said the Bishop, "we must keep those practical notions out of his head. The shrewd citizen and active layman sometimes break through the priestly penitent; and under that monk's cassock beats at times again the heart of the man of business. Go forth, forsooth, into the world! to become a soother of physical suffering, a social missionary, a sanitary preacher, and spend the inheritance of the church elsewhere—a scanty account of his benefactions poor Westbury Convent would then have to record. He has helped me to raise these battlements and he shall help me to endow them. I have set my heart upon it, and William Canynges shall escape from this house only when, with torch and chaunt, we bear his body across the neighbouring Down to his resting-place within the walls of Bristol, and under the vaulted cope of Redcliffe. No, no; the Church cannot part with him to society. The Church has its business, let the world attend to its own affairs and reforms. 'Let the dead bury the dead.'" *

Chapter II.

But a few years after the scene above described, and as a dim November day, A.D. 1474, was darkening into night, William Canynges, stretched on a pallet, in a cell at Westbury, was "enacting that great event" through which we shall all have to pass. At his bedside stood his friend and confessor, Bishop Carpenter, feeble with years, comforting the dying merchant-priest in accents so low and faltering, that they plainly said the

* Mendicant friars benefited by Canynges' death, as they had done during his life; but to the really deserving poor he bequeathed little to command a blessing. His benevolence reached the latter through his almoner; but the former were the objects of his own personal care, for they kept his conscience, and ministered to the supposed security of his soul. By them he was pompously buried because he paid them well to do it, and they panegyrised him afterwards in proportion to the value of his bequests.—*Pryce.*

confessor would not long remain behind the penitent. The deepening twilight struggled through the window; and on a little bracket stood a hand-lamp that flickered its ray across the pale, thin, resigned, but feeble features of the dying dean. Now and again his eyes opened languidly, and closed again, and his lips moved, as though they would join the muttered prayers of the Bishop by his side. At length the eyes closed and the lips did not move for some minutes, and the Bishop stooped his cheek close to the nostrils of his friend, to see whether he still breathed. Faintly the almost cold breath told that life still remained, and Carpenter paused in his devotions for a while, when Canynges, with something more of animation than he had shown during the day, suddenly opened his eyes, with a surprised look, as though he wondered to find himself still in this upper world.

"In this brief trance or sleep," said he, "I have been down to the verge of the dark valley, whereon rests the shadow of death; and as these eyes looked into that dim passage, which my spirit will presently have to traverse, I thought I met at the vestibule of the gloomy way one who asked me what I had left behind me in the world I was quitting to make my brother man remember me as a benefactor and a brother; and the thoughts of that conversation which we had on the sunny morning when I told you of the inward call I thought I had to work without rather than ponder and pray within, recurred; and then I recollected what I had done for this College and St. Mary's fane in yonder city, and comforted myself to think that, when centuries had passed, those aisles would still resound with offices and obiit for me. But the Questioner said to me, 'Do not build upon this, for, ere another hundred years roll by, mass, and obiit, and office will be no longer heard within those walls, which, nevertheless, you have done well in raising; since, for centuries to come, God, who is a Spirit, will be worshipped in spirit and in truth within them, and the name of William Canynges be preserved by an enlightened people, and not by a venal priesthood.'" The penitent again closed his eyes, as closed the day, and with night commenced the passage of his spirit through the dark valley.

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Two fair churches still stand to keep the merchant-priest in our memory; and had not his confessor interrupted his reverie on that summer morning, perhaps Bristol would now have to connect his name, like that of Colston, with some noble charity, and the 7th, like the 13th of November, be one of Bristol's great anniversaries. But the priests got the submissive penitent into their hands, and thus not a single charity, deserving the name of such, remains through the benevolence of him who was five times Chief Magistrate of the city where he made a fortune, and in whose middle age he formed so prominent a figure. *

* The motives which prompted Canynges' retreat may be fairly illustrated by a letter of Sir Hugh Fenn, who was Canynges' contemporary, and who wrote to Sir John Fastolf praying that certain law business of his might be concluded, that he might "have the better leisure to dispose himself godly, and beset his lands and goods to the pleasure of God and the weal of his soul, that all men may say he died a wise man and a

The Boatwomen of Redcliff.

In one of the windows of the north transept (Saint Mary Redcliff) are some fragments of ancient stained glass, which appear nearly coeval with the Church. On one piece six women in a boat are represented, possibly alluding to a particular event connected with the Church or Parish.—*Descriptive History of Bristol.*

1551. The pestilence [the sweating plague or sickness] reigned in the city of Bristol very sore for the time it lasted; for it swept away many hundreds every week; the which endured from Easter until Michaelmas.—*Outlines of Bristol History.*

Amongst the religious houses in Bristol suppressed at the time of the Reformation was the convent of Saint Mary Magdalene, which occupied the site of the King David Inn and adjoining premises, St. Michael's-hill. The foundress of it was Eva, niece of William the Conqueror. The last Prioress of it was Eleanor Graunte.

It was a fine bright April day, in the year 1551; yet a gloom pervaded the citizens of Bristol. This feeling of depression was most observable in the neighbourhood of the Bridge, which was then covered with houses with a Mariner's Chapel in the centre. This Chapel was crowded with worshippers on the morning in question; for although the Roman Catholic religion was no longer that of the realm, the instinct of the people, as in former times, was to fly to the nearest altars when any calamity occurred. Indeed, the Reformed Faith could hardly yet be said in reality to be established in the minds of the masses, as any one would have said who entered the Mariner's Chapel on this occasion, and saw the worshippers mingling old and new forms in their devotions. But those devotions, of however composite a character, were sincere; as most people are sincere in their prayers when danger is at hand and affliction has befallen them.

In the present instance the dreaded plague which had caused such death and mourning in other places had appeared amongst them. Two cases of that awful malady had occurred that very morning in Redcliff-street, not far from Redcliff gate. They were both fatal, and already there was a manifest reluctance and fear on the part of the inhabitants of the northern side of the city to cross the Bridge towards the quarter where the pestilence had shown itself. For this reason, though the Mariner's Chapel was thronged, it was almost wholly by the dwellers on the Bridge, and from Thomas and Redcliff-streets; as the citizens on the north bank of the river, cherishing the popular impression that running water was a preventative against the passage of infectious disease, hoped they would still be safe if they could avoid contact with the people in the infected quarter. During the day several other cases, all in

worshipful." From such simple inducements we believe that Canynges withdrew himself from the little world in which his lot was cast, to the lesser and stiller world of the cloister, and there, in the spirit of the beautiful adage that "repose is the milk of old age," we may picture that he dozed and dreamed till, in the expressive phraseology of his time, his spirit *passed* a placid exhalation into the deeps of eternity.—*Lucas's Illustrations of the History of Bristol.*

Redcliff-street, occurred, so that public terror becoming greater and greater as the hours passed, the Magistrates, to appease the growing panic in the centre of the city, consented to place a guard on the Bridge to prevent intercourse between the two quarters.

Still the pestilence raged, but for some time it was confined to the Somersetshire side of the town. The country people as usual kept aloof from the infected district, so that the unhappy Redcliff folks not only suffered from the terrible malady, but from the want of fresh vegetables and other provisions, for which they depended on the farmers and peasantry, none being disposed to run the risk of contagion by carrying these things across the Bridge, even for the sake of higher prices.

A few years before this, in the previous reign, when the ancient religious houses, conventual and monastic, were dissolved by Henry VIII., the Nunnery of St. Mary Magdalene, on St. Michael's-hill, shared the fate of the rest. At the time of its suppression there was not a very large number in the establishment. The elder ones for the most part retired to France, while six of the younger sisters, chiefly the daughters of Bristol merchants, determined to live together in their native city in privacy and devotion. Strongly attached to their own faith they mourned over its fall, and the hard fortune that had come to their institution. This was an active controversial period; theological disputes were rife all around, and it was hard to avoid joining in them. Even the six retired nuns were tempted through curiosity to read some of the Essays put forth by the disputants. One of the printed brochures bore upon their own case. It was called "Nuns do not serve God by shutting themselves up from serving society." The ground taken was that while work was to be done, the poor to be looked after, and the sick to be succoured, those who had health and strength, and who immured themselves in a convent, doing nothing for their afflicted neighbours, were neglecting the work which God had meant them to do. One of the six was of a more thoughtful and inquiring mind than the others; and the arguments put forth in the pamphlet carried conviction with them. She, as it were, felt that the sisterhood had been all these years living under a mistake—had neglected their true mission—so that the fourth morning after the breaking out of the plague in Redcliff parish she proposed to the other five, who with her inhabited a house within a walled garden in Baldwin-street, that they should go over and assist the poor plague-stricken people of Redcliff. At first her proposition was met with surprise almost amounting to horror; it was so opposed to their secluded habits. Since they had taken the veil none of them had mixed in the world's business or gone abroad amongst the habitations of men; but the arguments and entreaties of their more energetic sister prevailed, and woke up in them that wish which is to be found (often, it is true, slumbering, but still existing) in most persons who are not radically bad, to be doing something that is not selfish—to be up and discharging at some time of their life their duty to God and their neighbour.

The obstacles which still remained to the free passage across the Bridge would be an impediment to the charitable purpose of

carrying vegetable provisions and medicine from the centre of the city. The citizens on the north side of the Avon might object to their going to and fro, lest they should carry the infection with them. The ground opposite Redcliff-backs, now occupied by Queen-square and the Grove, was then known as the Marsh (Marsh-street preserves for us the tradition), as the tide at certain seasons used to rise and partially cover it. It was at all events uninhabited. So here, in an old shed, the nuns established a depot for food and clothes, and other things the charitable might give them, and hiring a boat they passed over to, or returned from, the infected quarter as often as they had need, working the little craft themselves, as no boatman cared to commit himself to the perilous labour. This arrangement was the best for many reasons. It afforded the nuns that comparative privacy which their former habits made it at first rather difficult for them to break through; while it rendered those who brought them help less reluctant to approach them, on account of the popular notion that the passage across the river in some degree purified them from the infection.

Thus for a fortnight, during which the plague was kept, or kept itself, to the Redcliff quarter, the good Magdalenes were of the greatest service. Their kindness, devotion and care were felt in every street and court where the awful scourge prevailed. They felt almost for the first time in their lives the luxury of doing good. Now, indeed, they could not help feeling within themselves that they were discharging far better the mission of Christian women than when mewed in the shady cloisters on St. Michael's-hill, they spent the day and night in barren mortifications or formal services. Their courage and activity rose with their sense of usefulness, and often in the deserted streets, where braziers of charcoal and pitch burned all day and night to purify the infected air, the only persons seen moving about were the six sisters, whose praise was in every one's mouth.

At length the plague, which was not to be kept back by any police regulations, showed itself on the other side of the city, too, and caused desolation within its walls until Michaelmas. The Magdalene nuns now, therefore, gave themselves up to the work generally, and organized bands of nurses, without any regard to religious distinctions, all labouring with that Christian devotion which never pauses to inquire the doctrines of those who are in distress. But the strength of the Magdalenes was over-taxed. They fell one after the other in a nobler field than ever was occupied by serried ranks, until just before Michaelmas the last and bravest of the sisters succumbed to the pestilence. But though they had fallen they were not forgotten. The following year a new painted window was being placed in the north transept of St. Mary Redcliff, and the parishioners, to show their grateful sense of the good sisters who so kindly came to their aid in their distress, commemorated the charitable heroism of the six nuns by having them painted in their boat, and on their benevolent mission from the Marsh.

I do not know whether the ancient piece of glass has been removed in recent alterations, but ten years ago it was plain enough, and frequently pointed out to the visitor to the church.

Cecilia de la Warre:

A STORY OF OLD ALL SAINTS.

Introduction.

Rogers, in his "History of the Callendars," enlarges a tradition, which, it would seem, he found amongst the old papers of All Saints' Church, and which is very briefly glanced at by another local authority. Under any form, the story possesses romantic interest. In Mr. Rogers's work, it is very evident his own imagination is employed to fill up the legendary outlines which, as well as we can collect them from the account, are given below: we may, however, observe that they seem to refer to that delicate and debateable period in the primitive history of the Catholic Church in England, when the Pope of Rome was insidiously but successfully pushing his authority over the Anglican Establishment, which, in the earlier period of its history, he did not possess. Amongst other innovations which the foreign Pontiff introduced was a prohibition, or at first at least a strong discouragement, of married priests. We need hardly state that, down to a certain time, the Catholic sacerdotal office in England did not necessitate celibacy; it was the policy, however, of Rome to make the priests in this land more entirely the servants of the Papal see, by leaving them no ties as husbands and fathers, and therefore allowing them to have no great interest, as ordinary citizens, in the State in which they lived. It took some time and the exercise of a great deal of authority on the part of Rome to work out this great change. Those of the priests who were married did not like the slur which the new order of things cast upon their condition, while many of the younger men in holy orders, several of whom perhaps had formed attachments if not engagements, saw with annoyance a bar raised between them and the domestic happiness to which they aspired. Thus there was at first a good deal of difficulty in carrying out the rule of celibacy. The superior and unmarried clergy urged and, where they could, enforced the rule; but for a time several of the young men, countenanced by the parish priests who were married, defied the Papal injunction and took wives as previously, thus offending the stricter advocates of the Pope's supremacy. The contest, however, was comparatively short-lived, and in the end Rome, as we know, carried implicitly the rule of celibacy.

As we said, it must have been during the period of the married and single controversy that the incident of Cecilia de la Warre and the Archdeacon of Llandaff (preserved, it would seem from Mr. Rogers's book, amongst the chronicles of All Saints, Bristol) took place. Cecilia, as well as we can gather, came of a high Bristol family, whose property lay between Newgate and Broadmead; and

there, probably, the family residence also stood, just under the shadow of the city walls. The Archdeacon of Llandaff was a young priest, who had his early education amongst the Callendar brothers, the Prior of which would seem to have been the friend and confessor of Cecilia. Rogers introduces her to our notice as calling one morning on the holy father, when he had retired for study and meditation. "She was tall and beautiful," says the historian of the Callendars, "and had not seen more than thirty summers. Her hair was braided with a rich chaplet of diamonds and pearls; one long cluster of raven ringlets dropped over her left shoulder; her dress, though not studied, was of the most costly character; and she drew near rather as one accustomed to command, than as a meek maiden about to seek the counsel of her spiritual adviser. She presented a striking contrast to the simple, lowly, and humble-minded sisters belonging to the priory. An acute observer would have little difficulty in detecting in that bright eye and curled lip a haughtiness of spirit that would ill brook being thwarted. It was manifest, however, that on this occasion there was some uncontrollable timidity mingled with her usual high bearing; one might have seen in her a laboured attempt at unconcern, made by a mind deeply sensible that it was bent on doing what was wrong." The purport of her business, it is further intimated, was to consult him on the delicate subject of marriage, which the Superior was only too happy to advise her upon, until he learned that the young Archdeacon of Llandaff was the object of her passion, and that their nuptials were actually determined upon, and then the Prior lectured her severely on the scandal of such a proceeding; but Cecilia is said to have turned upon him like a beautiful tigress, and defiantly told him the only thing she thought she ought to be ashamed of was "stooping to consult the poor dotard chief of a paltry brotherhood."

Though it is not very clear what her subsequent proceeding was, we may presume that she carried out her threat. But that she did not forget to pay off old scores with the Prior of the brotherhood of the Callendars for opposing her passion, we may infer from a deed which was preserved in the archives of the church, at least in Mr. Rogers's time, and which forbade the clergy to participate in any of the property which she or her husband left behind to one William de Novo Burgo.

This introduction will furnish the key to the following sketch.

Chapter I.

Cecilia de la Warre was an heiress, and an heiress in those days as in ours was an object of admiration. She might have been married over and over again. She was handsome and rich. The young merchant, as he went out for a walk in the neighbourhood of Bristol, could not pass through Newgate or Ælle Gate without being reminded that the owner of those fertile crofts was still without a husband; and though the distinction between burghers and the gentry in that day forbade the former aspiring to matrimonial connections with the latter, there were plenty of young gallants of the aristocracy who would be only too happy to share the heart and

lands of the heiress of the De la Warres. You may be sure that she never wanted a young squire to attend her through the streets, to wait upon her at the jousts and sports, to be her partner in the dance, or kneel next her *priez dieu* at mass. But somehow none of those made an impression upon her. Tilt, or ride, or shoot as well at the butts as they might, they awoke no tender passion in her, and when any of them, deeply impressed with their own eligibility, ventured to offer her their hands, they received a very plain and mortifying answer that they were not wanted; for Cecilia de la Warre was "a headlong, headstrong, downright she," and spoke her mind plainly.

"What can she mean?" said the city gossips; "if she ever intends to marry, it is time she thought seriously of it;" and then they proceeded to count up her years on their fingers. One old lady remembered when Cecilia's father and mother were married, another had a distinct recollection when Cecilia herself was born; and as female chronology, when applied to other people, never under-rates ages, they made hers already exceed the third decade. Now, for my part, I think the thirtieth year is as eligible a time as any other for young ladies to get married. They have then, if ever they mean to have, acquired all their wisdom and the contents of the cookery book; they have got decision of character to rear a family and are skilled in preserves. However, there is a popular impression that when ladies attain to thirty, if they have not by that time possessed themselves of a husband, they should be prompt in their acceptance of the first suitable offer made them. It is a season, too, when any jokes about being old maids, which marvellously amuse girls of twenty, are no longer relished. But Cecilia seemed to have none of those apprehensions or cares, and as everybody knew she might at any moment throw her glove at a good match, the gossips more than ever repeated their question, "What can she mean?" "She will take the vow and the veil," said one. "She will do nothing of the kind," said another. "She is not made of the stuff to put under lock and key, and see only as much of men and the world as may be viewed through a convent grating," said a third.

"Yet she is always at All Saints'," said a fourth; "matins, nones, lauds, and vespers; you may go there any time and be sure to find her on a rush-bottomed chair at the corner of the chancel."

This was quite true, and it set the good ladies wondering still more; for Cecilia, though so regular an attendant at church, was in other respects no devotee. But the guess of a fifth gossip seemed to give some clue to this apparent inconsistency on the part of the handsome heiress.

"But did you notice," asked the interlocutor, "that the whole month when Henry de Keynsham was not on duty and away at Llandaff, that Cecilia hardly entered the Callendaries once a day?" When one good lady starts an interesting and exciting surmise of this kind, it is astonishing with what avidity a roomful of gossips will run after it, and not the less greedily because there happens to be just the slightest tinge of scandal about it; for though matrimony was not then quite impossible for priests, the question, as we before

remarked, was in that uncertain and debateable state, that a prudent or scrupulous young lady, who had not the original or daring disposition of Cecilia de la Warre, would have avoided the dilemma. But she was no ordinary woman, and Henry de Keynsham was a handsome man and eloquent preacher, and both were, in no small degree, superior to the prejudices of the times. Still the priest was, of the two, the party most reluctant to face the semi-scandal of the act; and for this reason, though he saw plainly enough Cecilia was in love with him, he refused to act upon the many plain hints which she gave him. He never preached that those large dark eyes were not looking at him in the pulpit; he never in the middle of the day sat down to read in the library that Cecilia was not also seized with a studious fit; for the Callendaries library was open to the public quite as much as King-street in our day. Then she always wanted his assistance to make clear some passage, and as she held the tome before him, and stooped over his shoulder to point him out the obscure sentence, her soft jet locks touched his pale cheek, and both realised that glowing picture of the poet

> "A fair Corinthian maid,
> Gracefully o'er some volume bending;
> While, by her side, the youthful Sage
> Held back her ring'le'ts, lest, descending,
> They should o'er-shadow all the page."

Nevertheless, Henry de Keynsham hesitated, and feared to act upon the hint, though his colour came and went and his heart beat as he felt her soft warm breath on his forehead. For, priest though he was, he was flesh and blood and not stone. Cecilia sometimes quitted the library provoked with "the man's stupidity," but relenting, she retraced her steps up the stone staircase to bid him to supper that evening, for she had a famous menage and kept a good cook in the old family mansion in the green croft outside the Newgate. Henry went and supped, but even the spiced wine furnished from the old cellars of the De la Warres did not overcome his reluctance to brave the unpopularity of the union, though the priests' marriage was not strictly illegal: so Cecilia retired to rest, and woke next morning more mortified and annoyed than ever. Oh! you young ladies who can cock your cap, without fear of the Church's displeasure, at the handsome new curate, the soft tones of whose first sermon are still ringing in your ears; and oh! you handsome young curates, who can accept a pretty face and a good fortune, when both are within your reach, without any dread of being cited before the Arches' Court—do you not feel for the bitter perplexity of these two young people, whom an ambitious, tyrannical old Pope with his innovating injunctions to celibacy is keeping apart, when they might be so happy together, and all the better members of society and the Church, too, as witness our worthy parson with his dear little wife and interesting large family?

Cecilia de la Warre, however, was not a woman to be stopped by a Pontiff's order or a young man's shyness. I know nothing that is more annoying to a young lady than for a gentleman, whom she knows to be in love with her, to be slow and shy in coming to the

point; for which reason I think there are cases in which the institution of "asking" should be reversed, so that the discrimination of the fair one, surmounting all mock modesty, should aid the ingenuous gentleman in his distressing diffidence by a broad hint.

Cecilia de la Warre practically came to the same conclusion. She determined to tell the young clerk she loved him, and wished to invest him with her heart and all her broad lands. It was a hard necessity after all for a young lady: and did ever good looking unmarried curate before require such a palpable reminder, such a leading question, from a handsome woman, when such a woman had a good fortune? However, having resolved, as she mentally termed it, to take the plunge, she wisely made up her mind to do it boldly, frankly outright, without any beating about the bush or "making two bites of a cherry." "Henry," she said one evening as they walked side by side in the clipped yew-hedged green alley, "so I must at last tell you what I have long showed you and you ought to have saved me the trouble, to say nothing of the indelicacy, of telling you, that I love you, and am willing, nay shall be happy, to marry you, and make you master of my heart and all my estate!"

"But the Church's order of celibacy," replied the young clerk, speaking as though he had been turning over the same thing in his mind while they walked the yew alley, "the Church and the new rule of celibacy."

Cecilia's eyes shot fire. "The Pope—the Italian Bishop, you mean, and not the Church forbids it. The Church did not forbid it all these years that priests have been marrying and been given in marriage. The rule is an innovation, which ought to have been indignantly spurned, and not tamely accepted. Surely, if I have the courage to reject the despotic order, you, with your mind and learning, should know how to despise it."

"But deprivation might follow upon my doing so."

"And let it: I have lands and property as rich and large as those of your whole brotherhood; and what is there in the office of a priest to make you regret it or fear deprivation?"

"O! Cecilia," replied Henry, mournfully, "do not doubt that I love you and ardently return your love, because I hesitate; but if there be nothing desirable in the office of a priest, to worldly pride and worldly tastes there is a charm in that of the preacher. I could retire for the love I bear you to live on herbs far from splendid and unlettered ease; but to resign my pulpit—my pride—that to me would be (I confess) a sore deprivation. O you know not, Cecilia, the throb of pleasure—the feeling of triumph (perhaps it is a sinful one)—which a man experiences when he sees the upturned faces flushing and the eyes kindling under the influence of his eloquence; the exultation the preacher experiences when words glowing from the brain and warm from the heart pass in thrilling tones over a whole congregation, a church full of people, and move them as the passing breeze moves a field of corn. O! Cecilia, it may be pride—nay, it is pride—but yet it is a pride that is strong upon me. I feel it when I am composing my discourses, and putting together

earnest and eloquent sermons ; I feel it when I am delivering these sermons from the pulpit, and it wrings my heart to think that I shall be for ever silent—that I shall never raise my voice again beneath the vaulted cope of a church to stir and move a congregation !"

Cecilia de la Warre looked half sad, and yet half pleased, on the flushed and excited countenance of the young pulpit orator, and then said, " It is ambition, then, which is with you the rival of my love. I am satisfied, since it is not fear or superstition. But if Cecilia de la Warre, whose ancestors raised the sacred towers of St Anne's in the Wood and founded more than one religious house within yon city walls, have any power or influence with the Church, you shall still be her husband and the popular Archdeacon of Llandaff. Let those who have no wealth or influence succumb to the new orders of the Italian priest; I still believe a large gift and good promises may palliate even those in whose hands such matters rest. The Prior of the Callendaries is my oldest friend, and the friend of my family, and shall be my agent in obtaining liberty for you to continue to preach and to become the husband of Cecilia de la Warre."

Chapter II.

The reader knows, from the introduction, the tenor of the interview between the heiress of the De la Warres and the prior of the Callendaries, who, contrary to her expectation, instead of assisting her in her cherished project, severely rebuked her passion, and forbade her to think of a marriage, which, he said, must " bring scandal on the Church." Cecilia quitted the house of the Callendaries, anger kindled in her eyes and her pulse throbbing with vexation. " He shall, nevertheless, be mine," she said. " That old dotard is wroth at my charming from a hive of priestly drones the only sweet, honey-sucking, musical bee amongst them He is frightened at the notion of All-hallows being deserted by the crowds who now throng to hear my eloquent lover. Well, if they will silence his voice it will be their loss, not mine. I will have the more of his company and the more of his wisdom and eloquence at home."

She kept her word. A few months after this, Cecilia de la Warre brought home her bridegroom ; for, considering it was the spirited and determined young heiress who married the dreamy preacher rather than the preacher her, such might be the form of expression used. They were united by one of the married priests of the diocese of Llandaff, in which all the rigours of the papal order of celibacy were not yet enforced.

Chapter III.

Away from their native haunts there are some animals that will pine to death ; and it is asserted that the actor who retires into private life ever after sighs and grieves for the st ge and the footlights. It was probably under the same condition of being that the want of excitement and action soon made the young preacher of the Callendaries and Archdeacon of Llandaff droop in the rich retirement and unintellectual ease of his married position. He

had nothing to do—no sermons to write or preach, and the books which he chiefly read to store his mind with figures for the pulpit, had now little charm for him. His loving and high-spirited wife saw the effect which idleness was having upon him—the lethargy that came over him; and with many a secret and muttered malediction against the spiritual tyranny that could drive an eloquent preacher from the church, because he had become a respectable married man, she devised excuses for travel and amusement, hoping to awaken him from his torpor. But all would not do. One hour in the pulpit of the Callendaries, with a pregnant text to preach from, would have roused him up better than a hundred journeys or a thousand fetes. So he sickened and grew daily worse, until the Prior of All Saints' visited him, and so worked upon the dying man that he began to look upon Cecilia with strangeness and something like dislike, as though she were the cause of his committing sin, and suffering for it. The daughter of the De la Warres, who loved her husband with passionate love, saw this change in his manner, and it awakened her suspicions. So approaching the sick chamber of Henry one day with light step and stealthy tread, she overheard the Prior trying to induce the sinking man to "renounce this nugatory and adulterous marriage ere his death;" and then all the pent-up fire of her nature broke out. "Begone, tempter, from these walls," she cried, "since it is part of your so-called pious offices to make him perjure himself in his last moments. If you have no better consolation to give, never darken this door again: for far better he should die without shaveling and priest by his bedside, and with the justice and mercy of Heaven to depend upon, than that his lips should be taught to utter a great wrong to a loving wife." And Cecilia, taking the abashed Prior by the shoulder, thrust him forth from the room.

That same night the deposed Archdeacon breathed his last in the arms of his wife; and, in the delirium of fever, his imagination wandered back to the days of his eloquent preaching, for, fancying he was again in the pulpit of All Saints', he died with a wild but brilliant passage of sacred rhetoric on his lips.

. . . . . .

When Cecilia de la Warre, who lived to be an old woman, was approaching her end, the priests drew near to beg for the Church some of the broad lands she was leaving for ever; but the dying woman rose in her bed and reminded them of the debt of unthankfulness she owed them, adding that she bequeathed all her chattels and estates to William de Novo Burgo, on the strict condition that church or priest should never be a mark or an acre the richer of it.

And her determination, is it not written in the chronicles of the Callendaries?

The Castle and the Church.

THE TWO PROPHECIES.

"I saw a vision in my sleep,
That gave my spirit power to sweep
Adown the gulf of time."

It is stated that St. James's Church and Bristol Castle were built by the same person in the twelfth century—namely, Robert the Red, Earl of Gloucester—that the material for both was brought from Caen in Normandy, and that every tenth stone of those imported was set aside for the sacred building.

In the "Outlines of the History of Bristol," it is stated that the first printing press introduced into the West of England was employed in the Castle of Bristol.

The masons working on the scaffolding that surrounded the new donjon tower of the Castle could see, almost within a stone's throw of them to the north their fellow-builders plying their task diligently around the rising fabric of St James's Priory; they could also see the Abbot of Tewkesbury, under whose ecclesiastical control the new religious house was to be placed, accompanied by some monks, inspecting the progress of the work. But they did not then see all; they did not see how angry the priest was at some delay caused by an insufficient supply of stone, owing to the appointed "tithe" of that material having been partly withheld for the previous two days, because Earl Robert wished to expedite the last stage of the keep, and had therefore the daily supply to the Church slackened, only, however, to be fully made up, after the immediate pressure for the feudal edifice had passed over.

But the haughty ecclesiastic could brook no delay. The Baron had compacted to contribute every tenth stone to the church, and for no lay purpose or convenience must the growth of the sacred structure be retarded. The Abbot, his breast filled with the dominant feelings of a churchman, stalked through the green fields that in his day sloped down from the site of the new Priory to the sedgy banks of the Frome, which then a pleasant bright stream ran murmuring to meet the Avon, its margin grown with water lilies and bull-rushes. Here the Abbot entered a boat, and was ferried to the opposite side, where he continued his course by a pathway, which led through the broadmead or meadow (at present only known as the site of a crowded street), up the slope to the eminence then being first crowned with the new feudal building. The Abbot was in too excited a state to pause to contemplate the busy scene before him, as the embrasured walls and high central tower or keep of the Castle rose to his view. Blinded with his own special cause of indignation, he had no eye for the growing greatness of a place, which was then little more than a collection

of rude structures, but was destined, before another century or two, to become "a city of trade and wealth manifold," whose sacred buildings were to be enriched by the munificence of its merchants. No; Abbot John hastened on, and never slackened pace until, striding across the planks that formed a temporary passage over the moat until the drawbridge could be erected, he entered the Court yard and confronted the proud Red Earl, who with his seneschal and steward by his side was watching and directing the busy scene around him.

Earl Robert, or the Red Earl, as he was called, was the impersonation of an Anglo-Norman peer; his figure strongly built; his head firmly set on his shoulders; his face determined, yet thoughtful: he had a short red moustache, and hair of the same colour; his dress was of a quiet hue, though of rich material: his cloak, as well as his cap, being of a dark green Genoa velvet: a gold buckle, with a precious stone in it, was the sole ornament of the latter. He saluted the Abbot with courtesy mingled with a deference due and paid at that time to the ecclesiastical character, though he perhaps suspended the full obeisance which he might have otherwise offered to his priestly visitor, until he should learn the cause of the haste and displeasure that were manifest in the countenance of the angry priest.

"Sir Earl," demanded the Abbot, "I come to know why the work of God's House should be delayed for man's convenience: why for two days your servants have dared to withhold from St. James's Priory the tithe of stone, which you had undertaken to pay towards that sacred structure?"

From the heightened colour, the dilated nostril, and the kindling eye of the Red Earl, it was manifest he was an ill subject to brook from human being such terms; and that nothing, save the habitual deference paid to the priestly character, restrained him from an answer of the fiercest kind seconded by personal chastisement. As it was, he merely answered, "The stone, Father Abbot, was withheld by my orders, but only for a day or so. When the present stage of this tower is completed, I design to show my reverence for the Church by my increased expedition in supplying your Priory."

This did not appease the Abbot; the subdued words of the Earl only inflamed his haughtiness. "I tell you, Sir Earl," said he, "it is not fitting that the work of the Church should pause for a moment for any Earl's house or castle; your donjon keep rises like the tower of Babel in impious presumption against the face of heaven, while the building of yonder Priory lags for a day or awaits an Earl's or Baron's convenience."

"You are scant of courtesy, Sir Priest," answered the Earl; his eye almost flashing fire at being thus bearded in his own Castle yard in the face of his workmen and servants.

"I should be scant in my duty to that Church of which I am an unworthy son," retorted the Abbot, "did I not rebuke your disobedience, as I would rebuke the disobedience of king as well as courtier! And hear me tell you, by the authority which I hold as God's servant, and in the spirit of prophecy which now stirs within me, that when this proud fortress is levelled with the ground, and

not a stone of it shall stand, yonder humble church, from which you have held back its daily tithe of stone, that you might hasten the growth of that frowning keep (and the Abbot pointed as he spoke to the tower upon which the masons were working) shall stand in strong preservation, its bells sending forth its summons to prayer and God's service being celebrated within its walls."

The colour passed from the cheek of the Earl, but his anger was like the white heat of iron from the forge fire, it was hotter than in its red glow; his eye wore an expression which none had ever seen it wear before, and there was a terrible depth in his tone as he answered, "You have prophesied, overbearing priest: now hear me prophesy, too! When that power arises in this island which shall be able to raze the feudal fortress of the Baron, it will not brook to be dictated to by a shorn priest. Should yon church outlive this castle, it will only be because the priests who serve in it shall have ceased to mock, with their overgrown pride and insolence, the humility and charity of Him whose Gospel they profess to preach. Nor shall these walls fall until, Sir Priest, they have helped in the work of your humiliation. This is *my* prophecy:" and, so speaking, the Red Earl stalked off, leaving the Abbot to return in fierce dudgeon to his priory.

Both the Earl and Priest prophesied rightly. In 1654 an order was received from Oliver Cromwell, commanding the authorities of Bristol to demolish the castle, which had stood from Norman times. The Protector's precept enjoined all the "commonalty" of Bristol to assist in the work, the popular power being thus literally employed to destroy the frowning monument of feudal domination. Not a trace of the great castle built by the Red Earl Robert remains, while the church of St. James, built with stone from the same quarry, stands; and so far the Abbot prophesied truly. But, before the castle fell, the power of Popery went down in Great Britain; the march of intelligence and freedom kept together, and the same people who would not submit any longer to be deprived of their just civil rights by the Barons were equally resolute in vindicating their religious freedom against the spiritual tyranny of Rome. Before the castle fell a reformed clergy officiated in the priory church of St. James, and possibly the printing press of the castle helped to disseminate copies of those English Scriptures, the free perusal of which aided in the overthrow of the Papal authority, and thus was the Baron's prophecy also accomplished. The dust of the Red Earl, the builder of the castle, and the founder of the priory, is said to repose in a tomb of green jasper in the church of St. James.

A Tooth for a Tooth.

A STORY OF BRISTOL IN THE TIME OF KING JOHN.

1220.—The King compelled the Jews to pay great part of his charge into Ireland. The burgesses of Bristol contributed 1000 marks. A Jew, named Abraham, and who is said to have resided without the walls, on that part of the Frome called the Broad Weir, though cruelly tormented, refused to ransom himself. The King ordered that he should every day lose a tooth till he paid ten thousand marks. He lost one per day for seven days, and then, having but one left, paid the money.

"Rebecca, child, what noise is that?" inquired old Abraham of his daughter, as pretty a maid as ever tripped through Jewrie Lane. The old man was at the moment in a back room, furnished in curious and quaint fashion, and was engaged in looking over some rich and beautifully-set gems.

The girl did not answer, but seemed to be engaged in earnest remonstrance with persons at the door. "We must see him," said some rough voices; "so stand back, little maiden, and let us pass." Abraham came forth from his sanctum. "What means this, my worthy men," said he, terror in his face, and addressing a body of halberdiers who had now forced their way in through the outer bulk or shop.

"A writ from the King," said the leader of the party; "you are assessed in 10,000 marks' contribution towards his Majesty's Irish charges, and we require instant payment."

"Ten thousand devils—ten thousand angels, I mean," exclaimed the Jew; "does the King think I am Crœsus, and not poor Moses Abraham of Bristol, that he requires a royal ransom from me? To save my head, I could not find a fiftieth part of the money."

"But you must find it, if you mean to save your head, old Pagan," retorted the Captain of the Guard; "my orders are to commit you to prison, and detain you there until you find the gold."

"I am ready to go," doggedly, if not resignedly, said the Jew, delivering himself up to the men.

"Take him not away," cried the young girl, throwing herself at the feet of the commander of the party. "Do not, I beseech you: he is not rich; at least he is not so rich as you imagine. A tenth part of the money shall be forthcoming if you will permit him to remain."

"A tenth part," cried her father, in fright. "What dost thou mean, wench, to talk folly like that; a fiftieth, a hundredth part, I could not find, to ransom my whole tribe."

"Come along, come along," said the officer, taking old Moses into custody: "we shall find a way to make you get the money." And they carried off the old usurer of the Weir; his daughter, having first locked the door, following, with tears in her eyes, and beseeching her father, in whispers, to buy off the bitter persecution. As they passed along, folks ran to their doors and jeered the old man, for he was not popular, but pity for his handsome and kind daughter mitigated the public dislike. They entered the city by Newgate, and in the prison, close to that gate old Abraham was confined. As soon as it was told the Royal Commissioners that the

Jew refused his contribution, or, it might better be called imposition, it was ordered that the public executioner should daily draw a tooth from his head, until he relented.

Moses Abraham, on learning the sentence, prepared to submit, though his daughter besought him to save himself the pain and agony by paying the money.

"Pay the money—part with my gold. Oh, the agony of parting with a thousand teeth would not so affect me," cried the old man. "The teeth came—they grew; I worked not for them; they were none of my making; but my dear loved marks, my golden rolls, they were all of my gathering. I saw them increase with more joy than I beheld thy beauty expand, foolish child. Thinkest thou, then, that I will deliver them up to save those wretched morsels of bone, that, in a few years, will fall of themselves or rot in the grave? No; no." So saying, he submitted himself to the first act of dental surgery.

The implement which the executioner used was none of the smallest or best; so poor Abraham had a hard trial of it. Tug, tug: out at length it came.

The old man spat a mouthful of blood on the ground, and glanced at the molar between the rude forceps.

"Wilt thou pay?" demanded the officer.

"I will not—I cannot," answered the old man.

"Then to-morrow we will visit thee again," was the reply.

To-morrow came, and another tooth went: still Abraham preferred losing the bone counters to his gold coins. He was known in Jewrie Lane (the ancient name of the present Quay Street, and then the abode of the Israelitish community in Bristol) to be a man of immense wealth, and the chief men of his nation, and the rabbi, called on him and begged him to yield: but no: he never worked for his teeth as he had done for his money, and could he now part with it?—no, no. So his friends gathered their gaberdines around them, and wended their way back, and left him to his fate. Still there was one who lingered to console the daughter, if he could not move the father, and that was Jonathan Jacobs, a young, handsome, ingenious Jew, who was a devoted lover of Rebecca's, but whom old Abraham, because he was poor, could not abide. Suffering though he was from the repeated operations, as soon as the father heard the young people whispering in the adjoining room, he called Rebecca peremptorily to him. "Disobedient," he cried, "wouldest thou join thyself to my enemies, and trust to Gentile bars and bolts to enable thee to make love to that pauper within my hearing?"

A tear and a sigh were all the answers the Jewish maiden made to this bitter upbraiding.

A third, a fourth, a fifth, and a sixth visit to the prison were made by the King's officers, and each time they carried away a tooth from the old man's head: still he held out, and even ventured on a bitter jest when they had taken his sixth molar. "That is good eastern ivory," said he to the officers, "and I hope will suffice to pay some of the King's Irish charges."

Two more teeth only remained, and it was thought that the

King would never obtain the ten thousand marks, unless he had recourse to other torture. On the seventh day the seventh tooth was taken, and having but one more to lose, he begged the guards to save themselves the trouble of another walk on the morrow, and have both out at once. The executioner, however, excused himself, saying the prisoner need be in no hurry; the teeth took their time to come, and must take their time to go.

Next morning the authorities entered the old man's cell, and several of the chief citizens were there also to see Moses Abraham lose his last grinder, for he had made many of them feel his teeth in times gone by, when they wanted money and he made them pay heavily for the accommodation. What, however, was their wonder when, on making his appearance in the ante-room where the operation was each day performed, the old man expressed his readiness to pay the fine! "What!" cried they all, "part with seven teeth, and yet pay to save the eighth! Had you done this a week ago you would have been wiser."

But Moses replied not, save to tender the money, which was accepted, and he was released.

"I suppose," said he, or rather mumbled he, when he reached home, "thou, wench, thinkest me a fool for my pains; but hear me. Be sure it was not to save this wretched morsel of discoloured bone that I consented to part with my gold: but I had a vision, clear as Pharaoh's when he saw the fat and lean kine; and last night as I slept in my cell, I dreamt that under this tooth, the last in my head, was a great treasure, and, if I retained it, I should one day receive that, compared with which, ten thousand marks were but as a trifle: and so distinct was my dream that I believed it, and paid the ransom. How the vision is to come about I know not, but still believe it."

The ten thousand marks, immense as the sum was, were far from being the greater part of the Jew's treasure. In the vaults under his secluded and dim oriental-fashioned house on the Weir, was a still larger amount stowed away. So that Jonathan Jacobs, who hoped that poverty would compel the determined old man to withdraw his stern prohibition on his daughter against countenancing his suit, was disappointed. "Get thee away," cried the old man, in fierce anger, "thou shalt not have my Rebecca; thou shalt not."

"At least," said the young man, "give me reason to hope that you will relent, if I can find wealth to satisfy thee. Place any condition on thy consent, but give me grounds to hope for it."

"Then thou shalt have a condition," answered the old man, with bitterness, and smiling savagely as he thought he pronounced an impossibility; "when thou fillest my mouth again with good teeth, thou shalt have my daughter!"

Jonathan passed forth chapfallen and mournfully from the old man's presence, and the latter chuckled and laughed in triumph, saying, at the same time, "Thou hast got thy condition, be happy."

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Six months passed, and Jonathan Jacobs had not once shown himself at the Jew's house on the Weir; at length one morning, as the old man was about to go forth on some business, Jonathan presented himself before him. "Well," demanded Moses, with a

sardonic grin, "hast thou brought my teeth with thee? I swear by the beard of Father Abraham thou shalt have the maiden, if thou hast grown a new crop of grinders for me," and the old man laughed at his own cruel raillery.

"Thou swearest," said the young man, "and wilt keep thine oath!" And so saying, he drew from his pocket a most splendid set of white, enamelled, incorruptible, artificial teeth set in gold palate, and with the means of fixing them to the last remaining tooth in the old Jew's head.

Moses Abraham's countenance fell. He never dreamt of such a fulfilment of what he considered an impossible condition: but he had given his promise and his oath, and he knew not how to break either. He instinctively opened his mouth, and Jonathan popped the splendid set into it—they fitted him better than his own: "they beat nature" (as the Yankees say). The old Jew glancing in a polished steel mirror, wondered to see himself look young again: a row of ivory decorated his gums bare but a moment before; and his sunken and leathern jaws were suddenly rounded and filled out as if by a miracle. "Wonderful!" he exclaimed, and started to hear how plainly he articulated.

The fact was, Jonathan Jacobs was the most ingenious and cleverest artificer in all Jewrie Lane, and at that time the only artists in gold and silver and ivory belonged to this ancient and persecuted race. When Moses Abraham, then, in mockery proposed this task to him, he, after an hour's reflection, determined to turn the jest, if possible, into earnest, and the result of six months' patient experiment, diligence, and trial, was the triumphant construction of the first set of false teeth ever made.

Old Abraham recollected his dream. Here, then, was the realisation of it. A gold mine was under that old molar of his, to which the set was attached. A treasure was yet to be had from this wonderful invention.

"Thou shalt have my daughter," he said; "but thou must become my partner."

"The dew of Hermon is not pleasanter to me than thy proposal," answered the intended son-in-law.

In less than a mouth, Jonathan Jacobs and Rebecca Abraham were united under a canopy of crimson and gold in the old house on the Broad Weir, and, in a few days after, a new sign was put up in Jewrie Lane—"ABRAHAM AND JACOBS, Dentists." The forfeited ten thousand marks were doubled in a few years. From all parts of the land, toothless Lords and Dowagers crowded to Bristol, and stopped the way in Jewrie Lane with their carriages, all coming to have the decay of nature remedied. "Abraham and Jacobs' Indestructible Enamel Teeth" were the wonder of England, and divided with Magna Charta, for a time, the town-talk of every city. Orders came so fast, they could with difficulty execute them; and Dukes and Duchesses were content to make appointments with the renowned Dentists for months yet to come. Since then the profession of Dental Surgery has been almost wholly in the hands of the Jews, who owe many a fortune to that love which, in the case of Jonathan, was like necessity—namely, "*The mother of invention.*"

The Silver Cradle.

In the reign of Henry VII., there occurs in the annals of the city this simple entry:—"Maud Easterfield gave a ring to the image of our Lady, in the north porch of Saint Mary Redcliff."

There is something very suggestive in such solitary scraps of local history. One wonders what they mean: like the appearance of footsteps in sandstone, they set us thinking what kind of persons or creatures had left these tracks on past ages, and under what circumstances they happened to be made. The ring that Maud Easterfield gave to our Lady's image was the fulfilment, no doubt, of some vow, public or private—the result of a secret bargaining with our Lady that, if something would come to pass, a handsome jewel should reward the favour; for it was and still is a notion amongst our good Catholic neighbours that beatified beings are not quite above a little pious bribe of this kind.

But what was the object of Maud Easterfield's vow? That's the rub; and, being left to conjecture, not a few have guessed that a lover was in the case. Her young betrothed hero, of course, went to the wars, and was cutting off Pagans' heads while his affianced bride was weeping and praying at home in her bower for him; and, when not weeping or praying, looking out from her high lattice on all the country round to see if she could catch a glimpse of his waving plume or pennon, as he returned to fling himself at her feet. This was the most obvious, and, at the same time, the most pleasing and romantic view to take of the case, and I should have been glad to have rested satisfied with the assurance that the ring was the fulfilment of a promise made by Maud, during the absence of her lover, that if he returned safe to old Bristol and led her to the altar of that great church and there made her happy, the image of our Lady in the north porch, to which Maud had so often bent the knee as she passed in, should have a very handsome ring, set with emeralds, diamonds, and garnets. Well, I have looked into the matter, and am compelled to say, as a rigid antiquarian and a strict historian, that the conjecture of the lover must be given up. Maud Easterfield was a married woman, and as men cease to be lovers when they become husbands, and it would be highly improper for Mrs. Easterfield to make any other man the subject of vows, we may rest assured the ring had reference to a different matter. We find John Easterfield Mayor about this time, and there was but one drawback to the civic enjoyment which his Worship experienced in entering upon his office—there was no little Easterfield, though they had been five or six years married. John Easterfield made no allusion to the subject, as he was very fond of his wife, and knew it pained her. Nevertheless, he was himself not without some little regrets on the point, especially when, in the freedom of the civic feast the

cup went round, and they drank to one another's wives and children, and slyly poked a joke at his Worship about his *little family*. He succeeded in laughing with his waggish friends, though he by no means secretly realised the fun. Maud, however, could not even muster a laugh upon the point, though she had plenty of good cries to herself about it ever since the first year of their marriage, when she fruitlessly spent some weeks in making tiny articles of dress that it seems were never wanted. She had a sister-in-law, too, the wife of her husband's brother, Harry Easterfield, whose name you will also find during this reign in Barrett's roll of Mayors: this lady was blessed with a large family, and as if to aggravate poor Maud, actually had twins the year before the latter became Mrs. Mayoress. As usual, there was no love lost between the two sisters-in-law, for the prolific Mrs. Harry held her head high above the less fortunate Maud, and having found out that it wrung the heart of the latter to see children, she took every opportunity of bringing all her babies to visit their aunt, while she herself looked upon the possessions of John Easterfield already as good as settled upon his nephews and nieces. Nevertheless poor Maud still kept the baby-linen and bassinet that she had provided the first year of their nuptials, hoping that they might yet be wanted, and that that odious Mrs. Harry would not be able to come surrounded by her chickens and crow over her in cruel exultation. Bristol had not then the benefit of a *bambino*—that little silver baby which the Pope keeps in his own possession, save when as a particular favour he lends it to devout sons of the Church, like Lord Fielding and others who may be in want of an heir; but Maud was a pious daughter of the Church and daily she walked in through the north porch of Redcliff to say her prayers, not forgetting to include in her secret petitions what was next her heart. Passing in one day she fancied she noticed the image of our Lady smile, so taking this as a good omen, she vowed that it should have a ring of pure gold if a certain occurrence I will not particularise took place in the course of the next year.

In three months after this John Easterfield was proclaimed Mayor of Bristol. Redcliff bells clanging and banging, and all the bells of the old town doing the same, announced the great fact to his fellow-citizens. Maud as she knelt at her prayers heard, too, the tintinnabular uproar, which told the towns-folk in general that they had got a new Mayor, and herself in particular that she should have the usual guinea for a new muff, for this was invariably in olden time the perquisite of Mistress Mayoress.

The third or fourth civic feast that was held after John Easterfield's acceptance of the golden chain, his brother Aldermen, when the arrak punch got into their heads, joked him upon the old subject, and one of them having heard from his wife the secret of Mistress Maud's still retaining the unused bassinet, vowed that if there should be any occasion for this piece of infantine furniture during the civic year, the chamber would present him with a silver one. This proposition, which was the origin of a custom still preserved by all municipalities throughout the kingdom, when their Chief Magistrate is so fortunate as to have during his twelvemonth

of servitude an additional olive-branch to embower his nursery, was loudly cheered and heartily endorsed by all the Aldermen present. John Easterfield thanked them, and assured them that should occasion offer he would not fail to remind them of their generous promise. The rogue! I suspect he was better informed than the whole bench of Aldermen on a subject, which the institution of the guinea muff for Mistress Mayoress kept a secret from the rest of the city. It was afterwards noticed that he joined this time in the joke less artificially, more jovially than ever before; I fancy upon the principle that "those who win may laugh;" for only a few months more passed by when, one morning, tantarara went the bells of St. Mary Redcliff, ringing out as it were peals of jocund laughter, and the good citizens as they passed over the bridge, or walked along Redcliff Street, looked up at St. Mary's tower and wondered what it all meant: and the tradesmen came to their shop doors and asked what could be the matter, such a metallic clangour as there came thundering down from that beautiful tower. Then somebody, noticing a bustle about the Mayor's door, went to inquire if there was a new prince born. "No," says his Worship, who came out at the moment, his face beaming with joy, "only a little baby Mayor; I am just going to remind the bench of Aldermen that they had better send at once and have the young gentleman measured for a silver cradle, as he is growing so fast that every hour they defer it will add to the expense."

"Hurrah," cried the crowd: "hurrah!" and the bells went louder and wilder than ever, so that even Mrs. Harry Easterfield came out to know what it was all about, and, having learned the cause, retired discomfited, saying, "Who would have thought it?"

From that day to this, I believe, there has not been a single instance on record where the silver cradle has been claimed in Bristol; though not very long ago in Cork the Council voted one of those pieces of *family* plate to their Chief Magistrate; and some years since the Mayor of Liverpool was presented with one likewise. And though the guinea is no longer paid for the Mayoress's muff according to ancient custom, let us hope the cradle will be claimed in the next Mayoralty, when I have no doubt the Councillors will most cheerfully contribute towards the testimonial.

A Bristol Blanket.

We are reminded by a local Chronicler of the great debt of gratitude which we owe a Bristol citizen for the happy invention which enables us to enjoy our winter's snooze with so much comfort. "Blessed is the memory of the man," said Sancho Pancha, "who first invented sleep;" and if so, adds our annalist, blessed from a parity of reasoning is also the memory of him who first invented blankets—without which our slumbers would not be half so sound or snug as they are during at least six months of the year.

We are very fond of boasting of our Canynges and our Colstons, but, after all, give me the man who made the fortunate discovery of that soft woollen coverlid beneath which virtuous bosoms beat and rosy dreams are indulged in. How often do we descant on the genius of the friar who first taught us to make that villainous combustible called gunpowder; but, though many are the speeches I have listened to in Bristol upon past worthies, I never yet heard a single oration delivered on our local platforms in praise of the immortal inventor of blankets. Yet all the world over, from the Queen in her gorgeous fourposter to the squaw in her Indian wigwam, who is there that has not reason to thank that glorious old Bristol citizen, who, in the middle of the 14th century, devised, in a happy moment of domestic inspiration, that famous piece of drapery, which, originally invented within the walls of our ancient city, has since made the fortunes of the weavers of Witney? Talk of practical philanthropy; it is certainly a glorious quality, and on the 13th of November we still celebrate the virtue with our purses and parts of speech; but is there anything in the world that more practically represents charity than a good double-milled blanket, which can still cover the widow and the orphan when all without look coldly upon them?

Let us, then, I say, have a Blanket day as well as a Colston day. Let the Town Council appoint a commission to search out amongst our archives that auspicious date on which Edward Blanket entered the world, and was born on the right side of that same article. After he became a great man, and had amassed a large fortune by his glorious discovery, he represented our city in 1362. This is a point to start with. Let us trace back through municipal records and parish registers until we find out his natal day, and let us thereupon establish a commemorative anniversary, renowning it by a dinner, illustrating it by orations, and finally winding up the evening by a distribution of blankets to the poor! Let us have a procession to and a service in St. Stephen's Church, where the woollen philanthropist and his wife are supposed to rest; and, instead of silken banners being carried before us, as is the case with the Dolphin and the Grateful, let a broad spick and span new

blanket, with a bright border, be mounted on a flag-staff, and borne proudly in front of the array. I shall not pay the poor compliment to our local clergy to suggest a text or supply a discourse for the occasion, but there are passages enough appropriate to that ever-useful article, which so far materially represents charity that it covers, if not a multitude of sins, at least a multitude of sinners. Come, then, let my fellow-citizens unite with me in renowning an ancient Worthy, and doing honour to the old town: for a traitor to Bristol I hold is he who throws a wet blanket upon my novel but most laudable suggestion.

That 14th century I consider was in the history of Bristol an epoch most remarkable in the matter of physical comforts, for we find in our civic rolls the names of Turtle and Blanket associated. The flippant satirist said of the two Herveys—

> The one invented sauce for fish
> The other Meditations:

but who that has ever tasted a spoonful of the rich and verdant luxury which our six or seven times Mayor Roger Turtle concocted and christened, that has not felt their heart and mouth overflow with gratitude to the man. *Facile princeps*, however: first far away in the roll of merit amongst the benefactors of his kind stands Edward Blanket, who ought to have a statue in College Green, with one of his own wares rolled like a martial cloak around him.

And how came the excellent Edward to hit upon this happy discovery? you will say. Necessity was in this, as in many other cases, the mother of invention. Bristol, as the venerable Barrett and the brusque George Pryce inform us, was in the 14th century the seat of the woollen manufacturers, and this, when Leeds, like Eclipse's competitors, was nowhere, and Trowbridge and both Bradfords might be looked for in vain on the maps of England. Our weavers were then the big wigs of the city, who had their mansions and their looms in Temple and Thomas Streets, and their Guild-halls and their great feast days—everything in fact calculated to make them proud and prosperous; still, of course, there were degrees of wealth and success amongst the favoured craft, and Edward Blanket was for some years but a struggling member of the woollen fraternity. When others drank their spiced wine, he had to be content with very thin potations, and when their wives flaunted about and went to Temple Church in rich apparel, Mistress Blanket had to be satisfied with very modest garments indeed. In short, her excellent husband, though a hard-working meritorious tradesman, found it difficult to make both ends meet. Capital then as now carried the day, and Edward Blanket did not rejoice in a very abundant supply of that potent aid to commerce. The Curtises and the Hannys, the Tillys and the Turpines, with their showy dames, held their heads very high, when Blanket and his wife, very much against their inclination, were prevented raising their's above a modest level.

"Well, well, my dear," said the weaver, one night after they had talked over for a long time their hard struggles to make a do of it, "we shall never mend matters by sitting up and fretting over them; so let us retire to rest, for the fire is out and the night is cold."

"Cold," cried Mistress Blanket as she laid herself down by her husband's side, "it is perishingly pitilessly cold—cold as when the world is against one, and there is nothing to be got by weaving on a small scale."

"Go to sleep, love," said Mr. Blanket, "and cease to murmur."

But it was all very well to say "Go to sleep," when there were no warming pans in use, and the wood was burnt out, and hard unyielding coverings of camlet were all their bedclothes. Mrs. Blanket shivered from her teeth to her toes: when Mr. B. suddenly bethought him that there was a piece of soft, unfinished, loosely woven, and untrimmed woollen cloth in the room, which he had taken home to make some experiment with. He leaped out of bed, threw back the hard camlet, and covering himself and his better-half with the soft woolly cloth, they were both sound and luxuriously asleep ere the Warder cried another quarter-of-an-hour from the tower of Temple gate.

Shakespeare said a good many years afterwards, "there was a tide in the affairs of men which taken at the flood led on to fortune." At the same moment Mr. and Mrs. Blanket awoke in the morning, and nearly in the same breath both exclaimed, "What a delicious covering." But Edward Blanket carried it beyond an exclamation. "My dearest dame," said he, "trouble yourself no longer about the world. I'll toss it in my blanket, for I shall have the honour of giving a name to the article that will make my fortune and carry down my name to all future ages. Let others devote themselves to making cloth to keep them warm by day; be it my business henceforth to manufacture only that which will keep folks warm by night"

Before noon the two looms of Edward Blanket were set to make the article which to this day is called after him. A rapid custom followed; orders in abundance crowded in, and the two looms were soon multiplied by six. The King heard of the invention in his palace, and bespoke a pair for every one of the royal beds; the nobles throughout all the west of England sent their servants to purchase his wares; the Welsh gave over sleeping under their goat's-skins, and sent across the channel to buy the newly-discovered drapery in Bristol. For awhile indeed the kingdom rang with the praise of blankets, and people went to bed an hour earlier throughout all Britain, the better to enjoy the soft woolly warmth they imparted.

Thus our hero rose as rapidly in wealth, reputation, and honour, as though he were tossed in one of his own blankets, and never once descended until he was pitched into Parliament. But even a blanket-maker must die, and so did the worthy Edward and his wife. Beneath an arch of the wall of the north aisle of St. Stephen's Church the sexton will show you a tomb of the "pure decorated style of English architecture, and adorned with small sculptured figures within canopied recesses" (I quote George Pryce). On the top are two figures, male and female, lying on their backs, precisely in the same position as that occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Blanket on the cold but ever-memorable and auspicious night when the happy thought, to which they owed all their future greatness, struck him.

It is probably owing to the premature death of the sculptor that the incident itself was not fully embodied in marble, by the addition of a covering to the recumbent figures; or it may be that the artist meant to convey the idea only of the moment immediately preceding that when Master Edward leapt out of bed to get the woolly piece of woven cloth which led to his wealth and renown. But, however the case may be, this, we are told, is the tomb of Edward Blanket and his excellent wife, the former having liberally founded a chantry in the church of St. Stephen's from the profits of his woolly wares.*

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* It is a curious coincidence that on the gate of the building next to the porch, on your right hand as you leave the church after looking at the tomb, are the words, in large letters, "Blanket Warehouse." Edward Blanket I hope, unlike some of his survivors, was too sensible a man to be ashamed of "the shop." So that his spirit, I trust, will take no offence at his works following him so closely to the grave.

The Judgment Vault of St. Augustine's.

A TALE OF THE REFORMATION IN BRISTOL.

This little story is founded on the following extracts from the History of Bristol :—

1744.—The Library in the Bishop's Palace repaired, and partly rebuilt by Bishop Butler. Whilst these repairs were in progress, a parcel of plate fell through the floor in a corner of one of the rooms, and discovered a room underneath containing a great many human bones, and instruments of iron, supposed to have been designed for torture. A private passage, too, was found, of a construction coeval with the edifice, an arched way, just large enough for one person, in the thickness of the wall, one end terminating in the dungeon, the other in an apartment of the house, which seemed to have been used as a court. Both entrances of this mural passage were so concealed as to make it appear one solid thick wall.

Reign of Mary.—Mr. Alderman Haythorne's MS. says, "The Sheriff, Mr. John Griffith, was a very forward man in apprehending the Martyrs, and with David Harris (Mayor in 1550,) and Dalby the Chancellor, deserves to be enrolled. Three suffered in Bristol, and more had done, had not Queen Elizabeth's coming to the crown hindered; which brought back again from banishment Mr. Pacey, and Mr. Huntingdon: the latter, after his return, preaching at the Cross in College Green, charged those men there present with ill-using both those that suffered and those that escaped in these or like words. "Oh, cruelty without mercy, that a man should act, so laboriously, that which, without hasty repentance, shall hasten his damnation. Know you not who made the strict search for Mr. Pacey, whom, if God had not hid, as Jeremiah, you had burned, stump and all—he being lame? Yet you had no pity; and you know who went to Redland, to buy green wood, for the execution of those blessed saints that suffered, when near home, at the Back or Key, ye might have had dry. Take heed! a little sorrow will not serve. God may call you into unquenchable fire, worse than the soultering of green wood."

1557. May 7.—Richard Sharp, a weaver, and Thomas Hales, a shoemaker, were burned at St. Michael's Hill for religion.—August 13.—Thomas Benion, a shearman, for denying the sacrament of the altar to be the very body and blood of Christ really and substantially. Another MS. adds that a young man (a carpenter), and Edward Sharp, a Wiltshire man, aged threescore, were also burnt. Bishop Hollyman refusing to officiate, the burnings were superintended by W. Dalby, the Chancellor of the Diocese. The same executions are thus narrated in Mr. Alderman Haythorne's MS :—"Three men suffered as martyrs, 1st, Richard Sharp, a weaver, of Temple parish, who being examined by Dalby, the Chancellor, March 9th, 1556 [6—7], and by him persuaded to recant, he did so; of which he sorely and openly repented, and shortly after was brought to the flames. 2nd, Thomas Hale, who shook hands with the said Richard Sharp at the fire, May 7, 1557. He was a shoemaker. He was by David Harris, Alderman, and John Stone, one of the Common Council, [Mayor in 1562 and 1568] caused to rise out of his bed, and committed to the watch, and by them charged to convey him to Newgate, and shortly after [ward] he suffered. 3rd, Thomas Benion, who was burned August 27, 1557. More were questioned, but escaped."

About twelve o'clock on the night of the 3rd of August, 1557, when there was nothing to break the silence which reigned in St. James's churchyard but the solemn chaunt of the midnight service

from the church, a tall figure, muffled in a long cloak, emerged from one of the narrow streets in the rear of the old grey buildings, and as he passed, paused for a moment at the porch as if to listen; then raising his hands towards heaven, the mysterious stranger exclaimed in a low but fervent voice, "How long, O Lord, holy and true! how long shall persecuting Rome prevail over thine own land, and Jezebel sit a queen, and see no sorrow, and persecute, and get drunk in the blood of thy saints? But he now hunted as a thief shall one day proclaim their shame and their sorceries in the market-place. Yet there is one whom I would save; I can recognise a brother's voice in this midnight chaunt; him I would rescue from this pestilent Gomorrah."

The stranger then crossed the churchyard with a quick step, and stood before a low humble-looking house, on which a dim street lamp flickered its scanty light; then looking cautiously round, he gave three distinct taps at the door, which was opened by a young and handsome female, who scarcely suppressed an exclamation of surprise on seeing him. As he entered, and before the maiden had closed the door, another person, muffled like himself, appeared from a recess in a neighbouring house, and passed on. "Who could that have been, Maria, my child?" said the stranger to the young girl, as she fastened the bolt, "I thought him not unlike that liegeman of the arch-fiend the Chancellor Dalby."

"Pray Heaven it was not," said the young woman, growing deadly pale; "where Dalby prowls at night, death is likely to follow in the morning."

"Terrify not thyself, my child," replied the other, "One watches over His faithful people who can protect them from Dalby's master; but there is need of care, lest it might have been that bloody persecutor; for when Bishop Hollyman and his fat inferiors are snoring, like so many swine, in St. Augustine's, the Chancellor is abroad in the city, scaring even the night owl with his ill-omened presence. But where is your father?"

The young woman led the stranger into a small but comfortably-furnished back room, where, seated by a chamber lamp, and reading out of a large book for two or three others, was an elderly man. He seemed surprised on seeing the stranger. "O Master Huntingdon," said he, "do I again behold you in the flesh? We heard that after you had escaped from the hell-hounds at Redland, they captured you at Gloucester. You seem soiled and wearied with travel: Maria, my child, prepare some refreshment for this holy man." The old man continued to read from the Bible, which lay before him, while Maria busied herself in preparing a slight supper for Master Huntingdon (for the stranger was indeed that renowned and intrepid champion of the Reformers' faith). One of the inmates of the room was a young man of a manly and generous expression of countenance, and as his eyes followed the movements of Maria, a close observer could see that he took more than an ordinary interest in the young woman.

"Any new intelligence of that bloody woman, Mary, friend Hale?" inquired Huntingdon, when he had finished his simple repast, "she is still spared, I see, to harass the Lord's servants."

"Yes," said Hale, "and there are few nights that the wolf Dalby does not take some lamb from out our little fold."

"Hush!" interposed Maria, looking alarmed, "I hear footsteps abroad; I have heard them twice since Master Huntingdon sat down to supper. Hark! do you not hear them again?"

Breathless, and with hearts beating with alarm like persons after whom the blood-hounds were still in pursuit, the members of that humble family listened (the sense of hearing sharpened by terror) to faint footsteps that seemed to retire as they fell upon the ear. At length the sound died away altogether, and the family comforted themselves with the hope that it was some casual passenger.

Huntingdon having offered up a fervent and eloquent prayer for the peace of the Church and fall of Babylon, when the people should rejoice over her destruction, and Heaven avenge them on her, the family prepared for rest. Before retiring, however, for the night, they took leave affectionately of each other, with the fervency of persons who felt that before morning they might be called to bear witness for the faith. As the young man to whom I alluded, took leave in his turn of Maria, there was much tenderness in his manner. In reply to something which he whispered in her ear, she replied, "Tush, Allen! is this a time to think or talk of such trifles, when God's people are in tribulation, and we live in fear and trembling, and hourly dread of the rack and the stake!"

"I see," said the young man, with a melancholy and hurt expression of countenance, "I see that a Protestant maiden still cherishes an affection for the son of an oppressor of her father and her faith. Keenly as I feel it, I regret not so much that the youth Harris holds a higher place in your heart than I do, as that one who enjoys the light should think of mating with one in darkness. It is as though a daughter of Judah should bestow her love on the son of her Chaldean oppressor, at a time when her suffering tribe hung their harps in silence and sorrow by the waters of Babylon."

"Enough of this theme, Allen," said the maiden; "I tell you I think not so sanguinely of one so highly raised above me."

Hale and his family had retired to rest about an hour, when a man knocked loudly at the door of Alderman Harris, in Small Street. This unseasonable summons was answered by the porter, who demanded, in a rough and irritable tone, the business of so untimely a visitor. "Here is somebody," grumbled he, as he slowly undid the bolts, "who cannot burn a heretic without knocking up my master to blow the bellows; but the Alderman has grown of late so fond of these fires, it will be quite a pleasure for him to go to a hotter place."

"Open, thou lazy varlet, for the Chancellor Dalby," exclaimed an authoritative voice from without, with an impatient tone, that soon made the bolts fly back with a strange expedition.

"I want you, worthy Alderman," said Dalby, entering, and addressing the civic magnate, who had now made his appearance, "to assist me to catch that heretical fox Huntingdon, whom I have this night traced to his hiding hole. Master Stone, like a zealous Catholic, has gone before to summon the watch."

As this charitable pair passed on towards their prey, some person ran rapidly by them, not deigning to answer even Dalby's summons to stand. The circumstance induced Dalby, who was suspicious, to hasten their steps; and as they entered the churchyard they were joined by Master Stone and the watch.

About this time, and ere the Chancellor and his friends had arrived at their destination, the unconscious sleepers in Hale's humble dwelling were startled from their slumbers by a sharp knocking at the lower window. It was not necessary to continue this noise in order to awaken them, for they lived in such constant terror or apprehension, a very slight sound sufficed to break their slumbers. "Who is that, and what is your business?" timidly demanded a gentle voice from the upper window.

"It is I, Henry Harris, Maria." "Shame, Henry," said the young maiden, in a reproachful tone, "have I not forbidden you again to see me, until ——," and she closed the window.

"For Heaven's sake, Maria," exclaimed the young man, in a voice of painful earnestness, "trifle not now; I come not to see you alone, but to save you all—to save Master Huntingdon, whose name I now overheard the Chancellor Dalby mention to my father —be quick: I can even now hear their steps approaching."

The door was instantly opened. "Haste, Master Huntingdon," exclaimed young Harris, in breathless anxiety as he entered the house; "there is still time for you before the watch comes up."

"I stir not," said the preacher, sternly and inexorably, "I will even, upon this spot, abide the issue; I will meet that ban dog of the devil, Dalby, face to face, and defy him even at the stake."

"Madness!" exclaimed the youth; "if you are determined to sacrifice yourself, would you offer up this family with you? If you are discovered here, they must suffer for harbouring you."

"Do, Master Huntingdon," enjoined Maria, "save yourself, if not us."

"I yield, then," said the preacher, and accompanied by Henry Harris, he approached the front door to depart; but just as he had his hand on the bolt to withdraw it, the door quivered with the sudden and loud knocking of persons without, who demanded instant admission.

"We have lost time, we dallied too long," cried the youth, looking round in perplexity; "but the back way still affords a chance of escape."

"Trouble not yourself, young man," firmly observed the preacher, "I will meet my enemies and my death here;" but he was not permitted to indulge in his resolution, for young Harris drew him almost forcibly out through a back casement, as Dalby and his myrmidons entered at the front. The fugitives had gone but a few steps, however, when they were met by a part of the watch, who had been sent round by Dalby to guard the rear. With that readiness of mind, peculiar to youth and courage, no sooner did Henry Harris see this new difficulty than he suddenly and violently seized the preacher by the hood of his cloak, and dragged him straight towards the watch, while he cried "I have caught the old heretic at last; make way, the prize is mine, with the

blessing of the holy Church and of Chancellor Dalby; guard you, however, the rear, while I take the prisoner to the front; the house is yet full of such heretics, and this is but one egg from the cockatrice's nest!" By this ruse the youth was allowed to pass by the watch, and thus carry Huntingdon out of danger.

In the meantime Dalby, enraged at being foiled, and finding the bird flown, heaped curses and abuse on the heads of the unhappy inmates of the house; and, looking around for some cause or pretext of accusation, at length alighted on the Bible which old Hale had been reading.

As this obnoxious object met his view, his cruel eye twinkled with satanic triumph. "Ha!" exclaimed he, exultingly, "you too have dared, in the teeth of an order issued by the Church, to keep this pestilent manual in your house; you too, forsooth, would have an oracle of your own, and consult it and put what interpretation you pleased on its answer; you too, old man, are one of those self-sufficient champions, who would try with your puny hands to shake the eternal gates of a Church built on the rock of Peter."

"God, cruel and unrighteous servant of a persecuting power," intrepidly exclaimed the old Protestant, "will shiver those boasted gates. The ocean of blood which your Church has spilt will sweep away its sandy foundation; you, who have fired so many faggots will live to see your idols smouldering in their own ruins!"

"Bear witness, masters," shouted Dalby, turning round to his two civic assistants, Stone and Harris, while his face was nearly bursting with rage. "Bear testimony to those blasphemies. Watch, seize this hoary-headed malignant."

As they approached her father, Maria threw herself in their way, and Allen seemed disposed to dispute the matter with them. "Do those young vipers intend to defend the old serpent?" demanded Dalby. "Take them all, watch, as *participes criminis*."

"Do take us both," implored Maria. "If my father is to go to a dungeon or the stake, separate not his daughter from him. I would rather bear him company through the darkness of the valley of the shadow of death, than remain in the warm sunshine of life without him."

"You may have more of your wish, maiden, than you fancy," said Dalby, coolly, as he ordered the guard to bind Allen and the old man together; "I will take care this girl does not escape."

"Can we not bring our Bible?" enquired old Hale, looking wistfully back as he crossed the threshold.

"Only that it may be burned with you," was the reply.

About two hours after midnight the heavy gratings of Newgate closed behind the old man, his daughter and Allen, and when their persecutor Dalby was crossing the College-green towards the postern-gate of Saint Augustine's, the three Protestant captives were singing the songs of Zion in their damp and dark dungeon.

As the night passed in silence and slow progress over the dreary prison of the poor captives, they endeavoured to enliven its watches in affectionately comforting each other, and praising their common Lord. "It boots little," said Hale, addressing Maria, "to an old man, whether his bones bleach in a dungeon or the grave,

or are scattered in ashes by the wind, when his soul is sure of an inheritance of which the cruelty of man cannot rob him; but it grieves me to think that so young a frame and so tender as yours should be subject to the searching damps of so cold a place; and yet, but for the safety of a soul, more precious than the body, believe me, I would not link an unprotected orphan to me in suffering and privations, and persecutions. No, Maria; I am infirm but not selfish."

"Talk not thus, father," exclaimed the girl, "separated from you I could not live; it is sorrow to see you here, but it is joy to be with you. And why call me an orphan?"

The old man seemed perplexed with the question. He paused for a moment and then said hesitatingly, "You are—you would be an orphan, if your only protector was removed, one who feels for you the force of even a parent's love."

A key now grated in the lock of their lonely cell, and the gaoler entered to inform them that a guard from St. Augustine's was in waiting to conduct them to the monastery. A grey heavy mist of morning hung over the narrow and intricate line of streets, through which the guard conducted them. As they passed in front of the Pithay-gate, they were accosted by a man in a large flowing wig and a black patch over his right eye. He addressed himself to the guard, and demanded, in the name of the city, their business with the prisoners. The guard, in reply, said they were servants of St. Augustine's, whither they were conducting those persons to be tried on the charge of heresy. "Good," said the citizen, approaching the three Protestants, "but I must register their names." "Friend," continued he, addressing Hale, then lowering his voice, so as not to be heard by the guards, "be strong, be faithful, and fear not them who cannot injure the soul, though they may burn the body." The old man at once recognised the voice of the intrepid Huntingdon, under the guise of the seeming citizen; but before he could reply, the latter had disappeared.*

As they crossed the Green, Hale, looking towards the old pile which rose before them and loomed larger in the haze of the morning, raised his hands to heaven and exclaimed, "Proud and aspiring building, beautiful as thou seemest from without, what rottenness, and cruelty, and sin, dost thou contain! Yet one day shalt thou be purified of thy corruption: the blackness of religious darkness which pervades cloister and choir shall in one day be dispelled, by the sudden rising of the Gospel sun which now shines only in the habitations of the poor, and the dungeons of martyrs."

"Cease thy blasphemy, old grey head," interrupted one of the guards, striking him with the end of his partizan.

On entering the monastery the prisoners, notwithstanding the

* An incident similar to this actually occurred during the persecution of the Baptists during the reign of Charles II.; one of their ministers was named Gifford, and he was a most enterprising and adventurous man. When a party of the proscribed sect was passing through Lawford's-gate, a man in a flowing wig and a large patch on his face, addressed a few words to them, and it was not till sometime after they learnt that the person so disguised was their own minister.

supplications and tears of Maria to be left with her father, were removed to separate dungeons, where they had no means by which to calculate the progress of time but the indistinct sounds of the different religious services of the day and the silence by which they were succeeded. At length, after a long and weary confinement, the oppressive solitude of which was only broken by the appearance of a domestic of the monastery with a loaf of coarse bread and a pitcher of water, a messenger arrived, as it seemed to Maria, about an hour ere midnight, to summon her before the "holy tribunal" for the trial of all heretics. A handkerchief was bound over her eyes, and the officer led her by the hand, at first, it appeared to her, through some large building; then she entered a flagged court and felt the cooling night air fall with its refreshing influence on her feverish cheek; from this she passed again into some building, and began to descend a steep flight of stone steps, up which a cold wind crept, chilling her slight frame. Having reached the bottom her conductor withdrew the handkerchief from her eyes, and the poor bewildered girl was surprised to find herself in a low vaulted apartment, lit by a cresset or rude lamp that hung by an iron chain, rusted by the damp, from the ceiling over a stone table, round which sat several dignitaries of the monastery, dressed in stole and surplice. Opposite this reverend and relentless tribunal stood a band of halberdiers belonging to the monastery, and having in their custody four or five persons, amongst whom Maria recognised her father and Allen. With the agility of an antelope she sprung from the side of the officer under whose surveillance she was, and flung herself on the old man's neck. It was a scene which would have moved any but that *sacred* and implacable bench. Even some of them showed that their hearts were not of granite; Bishop Hollyman passed his hand across his brow, and an ascetic-looking monk who sat next him turned his head aside. Dalby, however, proved himself impenetrable to every feeling but one of rigorous, unbending cruelty and bigotry. With a countenance black as night he arose from his place by the table, and calling to the halberdiers to separate the heretics, sternly commanded Maria to be silent, as it was "no time or place for *such follies.*" He then turned to the other members of the "secret court," and requested that the trial should proceed.

Dalby then recited a long article of accusation against Hale, his daughter, and Allen, for reading the Bible without note or comment; for harbouring an attainted heretic, in the person of Huntingdon; for reviling the saints and for denying the sacrament of the altar to be the very body and blood of Christ really and substantially.

When the article had been read, Bishop Hollyman demanded what Hale had to say to the charge of heresy.

"The charge of heresy, I deny," replied the old man; "but ——"

Hollyman, who seemed to possess more humanity than the rest, here interrupted Hale, and cautioned him against criminating himself by any admissions.

"Stop him not, stop him not," exclaimed Dalby; "suffer the

old fox to walk into the trap, and save us the trouble of catching him."

The Bishop's pride was hurt by this dictatorial interference of Dalby.

"If the Chancellor," said he, in a tone of offended dignity, and rising to depart, "will be president in this court, the Bishop had better retire."

Dalby offered a few words of apology, and Hollyman appeared pacified.

"Now, old hoary-headed heretic," exclaimed Dalby, "what have you to say for yourself?"

"Where are my accusers?" inquired the old man.

"Where are they?" inquired the Bishop, glancing round the apartment, "I see none here."

"I am his accuser," exclaimed Dalby, starting up, "and I include yon maiden in the charge."

The old Protestant cast a withering look on his persecutor. "Minister worthy of Satan and the system you serve, vampire of Rome, will you not be satisfied to drain the contents of those old veins, but would you also feed your diabolical hate on the young warm blood of a gentle and meek creature like this? Take me—grind those aged bones on the rack, but do not sink your soul to deeper perdition by an unnatural act of the enormity of which you are not aware. Does your nature or instinct tell you nothing, or would you murder and persecute when you ought to protect?"

"I charge them," interposed Dalby, his countenance almost livid with rage and mortification, at being bearded in his own den, "I charge them first—"

"Save yourself the trouble so far as I am concerned," said the old Confessor. "When the blood hounds of Rome open their mouths for the flesh of an old man it shall not be refused. If this poor frame can bear witness to the faith, I shall glory in it; I have harboured Huntingdon; I have read the Scriptures. There is *my* admission, and now for your torments and your *auto da fe*."

As the old man thus expressed himself, his eye kindled and all in the apartment seemed struck with his intrepidity. Dalby, however, nothing could move. Wth a cold satanic scowl on his countenance he said to Hale, "Well, my venerable hero, we will presently see with what ecstasy you will embrace the engine you have called for. Do you recant?"

"No."

"Then bring out the rack. What ho! there, Claud!"

In answer to this summons two savage-looking, gloomy fellows, dressed in black, and with arms bared to the elbow, appeared from an inner appartment, and drew aside a curtain of dark drapery, which hung nearly opposite the Judges, and discovered a grim looking machine, in which the spectator had no difficulty in recognising the rack.

Maria uttered a half-suppressed shriek on seeing this horrid engine, and the old man's lip quivered for a second, while there appeared an expression of hesitation in his eye; but the weakness

was momentary, and, ejaculating a short prayer to Heaven, he continued to look at the instrument with courage and composure.

The two men approached Hale, and were about to proceed with the business of torture, when Maria sprung between them and the old man, and dashed them off with a force which she did not appear to possess.

"Ha!" exclaimed Dalby, "that young heretic is possessed of a devil; had we not better see if Beelzebub may not be exorcised out of her by the rack?"

The executioners laid hold on the gentle frame of the young girl, but were stayed by the order of Bishop Hollyman, who addressed himself to Hale. "Old man," said he, "I cannot offer you life if you recant; but an instantaneous repentance, and retraction of the blasphemies you have uttered against the Pope and the holy Church, may save you the torture." The old man paused for a moment, his lips moved for a few seconds in silent prayer, and he then said, slowly and firmly, "I will bear witness to the truth."

At a signal from Hollyman Maria was withdrawn, or rather torn from the arms of the old man, whom the tormentors proceeded to place on the rack. When the cords and the thongs were fixed, the Bishop again called on him to recant, but the old man heard or answered him not, for he was engaged in prayer for strength.

"He is contumacious," said Dalby;" let the rack reason with him;" and presently a deep moan (at the sound of which Maria fell with a shriek insensible on the cold floor of the dungeon) showed that the work of torture had commenced on the wasted frame of the old man.

Again Hollyman called out to him to recant, without receiving any answer; but on the second application of the torture Hale exclaimed, in a voice tremulous from pain, "Stop, stop!"

The tormentors relaxed their labours for a moment, and Hale continued in an agitated tone, every muscle quivering with agony, "If I recant, will you burn me, as you did Sharpe, when he recanted?"

The Bishop was about to answer, but Dalby interposed, with a false promise of life for recantation. On another signal from this cruel inquisitor, one of the halberdiers approached to loose the thongs and release Hale. As the man endeavoured to undo the cords, he stooped over the old Protestant and whispered in his ear, "Would you prove a coward to your God now, and deny Him before His enemies, to save your miserable flesh another pang?" The voice was Huntingdon's. Altered as were his features by art, and strange the guise in which that intrepid man had joined the guard of the monastery, and intruded himself into the very den of the lions that were seeking to devour him, Hale knew the reformed preacher, and drew fresh courage from his exhortation. He looked towards the table where his judges or rather accusers sat, and said "Let the rack do its office again, and punish the flesh that would betray the spirit which will never stoop to your idolatries." Dalby's look was that of a demon as he exclaimed, "Then give him no stint to his wish; and he may again change his mind."

The tormentors followed the Chancellor's instructions to the letter, but Hale was firm. Once or twice the force of the torture was acknowledged by a moan of anguish, but he remained firm. At length, in a weak and almost insensible state, he was released from the rack, and the "sacred tribunal" proceeded to pass sentence on him as a contumacious and confirmed heretic, to be burnt on St. Michael's hill with green wood.

As the sound of the great bell, reaching even this deep vault, told the hour of midnight, the Bishop rose to depart; but Dalby, not yet satisfied with his night's work, proposed that they should proceed to try the other prisoners. "No, no," said Hollyman, "we have already had enough of an unpleasant duty; and besides, my flask of Rhenish and venison pasty must have been awaiting me for the last hour."

Maria slowly awoke to consciousness as the sound of the retiring steps of the conclave ceased on the stone stairs which led up into light from their subterraneous courts.

Chapter II.

On the morning of the day after these occurrences, a stream of people might be seen passing from every part of the city up Steep Street, and through the Fryers, towards St. Michael's Hill. John's Gate, Frome Gate, and even St. Giles's poured out the population, all hurrying to behold the "burning of a heretic," with a sight-seeing avidity which time has not diminished in their descendants. Long before the appointed hour, that part of the hill appropriated to those revolting tragedies was thronged with persons of all classes, ages, and sexes. The city was nearly deserted. From Broad Street, the person whom business or a better feeling kept at home, could behold the crest of the hill, as it rose above the long line of gabled houses, peopled with thousands, thick as swarms of locusts, from whom, ever and anon, the deep hum of expectation or impatience was borne by the breeze to the ears of the few who still remained in the almost silent city.

The scene on the hill itself, for nearly two hours before the business of the day commenced, was so noisy and uproarious, and often so mirthful, that one would suppose a bear was about to be baited instead of a human being burned. Nearly on the summit an open space of some extent was kept by a strong civic guard, which, with difficulty, restrained the crowd from encroaching on the ground set apart for the performance of the frightful drama. In the centre of this space, and about twenty yards apart, stood two grim-looking stakes, to which were attached iron chains; a heap of green faggots surrounded each, and a rude temporary platform was arranged at no great distance. Though the circle was large, so numerous were the spectators, there were many who could not obtain a sight of the preparations going on; and those who were more fortunate in securing good places vied and wrangled with each other for "positions of pre-eminency." The loudest and most obstinate in asserting their claims were the women. A slave merchant's wife was vehement in her reprobation of the impudence of the age, because an armourer's dame intercepted the view by stand-

ing rather in front. "No wonder," said the former, addressing some person who stood near, and quite loud enough for the object of her anger to hear it, "no wonder there be want in the city, when folks who should stop at home to blow the bellows for their husbands must, forsooth, go out a spectacle seeing; for my part, I think it worse than heresy."

The object of this taunt was not slow in retorting. "Lack-a-daisy," exclaimed she, turning round, "hear the daughter of the double stitcher, from Defence-lane; you will not drive me as your husband does his slaves, and you do your husband. I marvel you did not come out in his hose, and leave the hen-pecked loon in that flowered brocade, since slaver's wives will wear brocades."

This interesting interview might have been prolonged, had not an exclamation from some persons in the crowd of "The procession's coming," called off the attention of the disputants to the all-engrossing business of the day. The announcement, however, was soon discovered to be unfounded; and when the momentary buzz which it excited had ceased, the attention of the slave-merchant's wife was attracted to another object. Indeed, the sharpness of her antagonist's tongue did not tempt her to return to the charge in that quarter. A group on the opposite side, and so highly favoured as to be permitted to occupy a bench close by the platform, next caught her eyes, and seemingly excited her envy also. "Is yonder Alderman Harris's dame?" inquired her neighbour, a young man in a Genoese velvet cloak, a gay beaver, and a silk doublet. "Yes, charmer," replied the person addressed, "with her son and a hoyden wench, whom his mother expects him to marry, but Henry Harris, they say, is little disposed to be obedient to his parents in that particular."

While this conversation was proceeding, the object of it, a fine, but proud and somewhat vulgar-looking woman, sat with an air of much complacency, occasionally directing her conversation to her son and the young maiden whom she designed for his wife, and who was the daughter of Master Stone, Harris's co-partner in the work of persecution. The young man's attention, however, was otherwise employed in the close observation of a respectable looking citizen, who occupied a prominent place in the crowd near him, and who wore a flowing wig and a dark patch over his eye. At length the youth, as if satisfied of the truth of his surmises, muttered to himself, "It is he; but what madness for the hunted stag to come amongst the very hounds that are seeking him." Henry Harris then glided quietly amongst the crowd, so as to approach unobserved the seeming citizen, on whose shoulder he gently laid his hand; the latter started in surprise and alarm, but almost immediately recognised the young man, who, pressing through the crowd, signalled to him to follow. When they had reached a clump of scathed pines, which stood apart from the people, "Well, Master Huntingdon," said Henry, "is it not a tempting of your fate to come on such a day as this and to such a scene, when men are so eager for your blood?"

"Young man," replied the preacher, "if you still entertain one

feeling for the bad faith of your father, look around, and tell me what you think of these fiery preparations."

"You know that, save in name, I have no connection with the Church which persecutes you; but let me entreat you to quit a place where you are in momentary danger of detection."

"I wait to see a Christian bear witness to the faith," firmly answered the preacher. "But is the young maiden Maria to be included in this holocaust to unholy Rome?"

"Heaven forbid, exclaimed the young man, growing pale; "it was to speak of her I sought you."

Just then the great bell of St. Augustine's tolled out with a deep and ominous sound, which every one on the hill understood as the first signal preparatory to the moving of the hideous procession from the monastery. A buzz passed through the crowd, and then it swelled into a loud shout, which reached back almost to the ears of the unhappy victims. "Meet me here at midnight, and we will speak further of her," said the preacher: "now I must witness how the old man and Allen bear evidence to the faith," and he once more mingled with the crowd.

I must conduct the reader again to the old sombre pile of St. Augustine's, now the scene of such busy preparations for the approaching "Act of Faith."

Owing to some slight feeling of humanity on the part of Bishop Hollyman, Maria still continued ignorant of the sentence passed on Hale, and in which Allen was subsequently included. Though in suspense and wretchedness, she was still happily unconscious of the horrid fact, the knowledge of which must have been too much for her tender frame and brain. She constantly inquired for her father of those who served her with her daily dole of bread and water, but they were either unable or forbidden by the Bishop to give her information. The noise of preparation, therefore, and even the tolling of the great bell, as it penetrated her solitary dungeon, more perplexed than alarmed her. Sometimes, too, a feeling of apprehension for Henry Harris, who, in rescuing Huntingdon on the night of their arrest, must have risked his own safety, crossed her mind.

Early on the morning of the day appointed for their painful death, the old man and Allen were on their knees in their cold dungeon, and when Dalby's messenger arrived to tell them that in an hour they must be ready to start on their journey for the stake, he found them still in a praying posture. Something, however, dwelt heavily on the mind of Hale: and when the messenger further inquired if they would have a confessor, he refused, but earnestly entreated that he might be permitted to see the Chancellor, even for a few minutes.

"Ho, ho, my venerable martyr," said Dalby, entering the cell with a diabolical grin of triumph on his face, "so your heretical obstinacy begins to melt before the fire has even touched it. You sent for me; make haste with your communication, for the crowd on St. Michael's begin to grow impatient, and you are an object of curiosity to thousands to-day."

Hale, with difficulty, repressed the rebuke which was rising on

his lips; "I sent not for you about any matter concerning myself," he replied, "but touching the maiden, Maria."

"Yes," interrupted Dalby, "the pretty redbreast, whom we enclosed in the same net with you, Master Owl; or rather I should call her that little heretical cockatrice, which would seduce the son of a good Catholic from his faith and parents."

"What mean you?"

"Do you know that paper?" said Dalby, his face scarlet with rising choler, and presenting an opened missive to the old man, "it is signed 'Henry Harris', and was found in your dwelling. It is a missive, as you perceive, from that weak and sinning youth to your daughter, and from its contents it is clear that the young harlot has been too successful in tempting this youth to her own heresy by her hellish allurements."

The old man gazed bewildered on the missive, then said, "If Heaven has opened the youth's eyes, the maiden is only made the instrument of his conversion."

"Out upon you, old blasphemer," shouted Dalby, "but the young witch shall burn for her sorceries. Though she had the pity of a hundred Bishops to protect her, this evidence will bring her to the stake."

"Cruel man," replied Hale, "do not commit an awful sin; I never besought you for my own life, yet let me beg for hers, were it but for *your* own sake."

"Keep your breath to cool your fingers at the stake."

"Would you burn your own limbs? Will the maiden find a murderer where she should experience a protector?"

"Peace, old fool," retorted Dalby, quitting the room.

"Stay, stay," exclaimed the old man; but the door closed on him, and his words fell idly on its clenched and iron-covered panels.

An hour afterwards the tongue of the great bell gave its second signal, and the procession was seen emerging from under the Abbey gateway, which still stands, a beautiful relic of the later style of Norman architecture. The cortege was preceded by a band of halberdiers, who were followed by two officers bearing a standard, on which was inscribed the episcopal arms of St. Augustine's. Next came three men carrying large paste-board figures on poles, supposed to be representations of heretics who had already suffered for their errors; then appeared a gigantic crucifix, covered by black crape, and supported by a priest. In the rear of this, and each attended by two friars, walked the poor victims, dressed in linen garments on which were painted fiends and flames; they also wore tall conical paper caps, decorated in like manner. The air of the old man and Allen was dauntless and composed, and though the friars frequently addressed them, they observed strict silence: the Bishop's post was, or ought to have been, next, but Hollyman not relishing the cruel duty, his place was taken by the Chancellor Dalby, who rode a large black horse, richly but gloomily caparisoned. Another guard of halberdiers drew up the rear, and the whole closed with four executioners, dressed in black, and carrying lighted torches.

As the procession, like some great snake uncoiling itself from its den, wound out through the gateway and across the Green, the bell continued tolling from the square embattled tower above them; nor did the same monotonous and melancholy sound cease while the horrid cortege, which was accompanied by a crowd of spectators, moved through the narrow and steep line of old streets which then led from the monastery, along Host-street, up Steep-street to St. Michael's hill. On approaching the place of execution, an opening was made by the guard, and the procession passed on into the clear space, finally arranging itself under the platform, which was occupied by the Chancellor Dalby, Harris, Stone, and other civic authorities. Mass was then celebrated, the populace all the time remaining uncovered. This being finished, a priest arose and pronounced absolution on the two condemned heretics should they repent and recant their errors. Hale and Allen, however, continued silent, and engaged in mental prayer. At length the ceremony terminated by Dalby reciting the act of accusation, to which he added the sentence of the "sacred court" that they should be burned alive as contumacious and confirmed heretics.

An awful pause followed the enunciation of this fearful sentence. During this moment of dead silence a voice was heard clearly and audibly from amongst the crowd, exclaiming, "Be faithful!" Old Hale and Allen, as they held back their arms to be pinioned by the executioners, knew the voice and drew confidence from it. The crowd heard it with surprise, and it startled even the hardened Dalby on his platform; but none save the two martyrs could guess from whom it proceeded.

As the executioners led the victims to the stake, several persons, unable any longer to endure the sight, were seen struggling to escape from the crowd. When locked by the chain to the stake, Hale looked with a smile of encouragement towards Allen, and exclaimed, pointing with his pinioned hand as well as he could to the prospect below, "Be of good courage, brother; from this height we will serve as beacon lights to show to the region round about the way of salvation."

"Peace, blasphemer!" shouted Dalby from his platform.

"Minister of Satan," exclaimed the old man, casting a withering glance towards the Chancellor, "for you a fire more lasting is pre——."

The old man's figure was suddenly lost to view by a dense black cloud of smoke, which rolled curling around him in suffocating volumes; the executioner, by a signal from Dalby, fired the green faggots and a moment after Allen had shared the same fate. A red flame almost instantly shot up through the smoke, and was followed by a cry of anguish, but from out which of the fires it proceeded no one could say. From several parts of Bristol were seen the two columns of flame, as they shot up fiercely and suddenly towards the sky, amid the assembled thousands on the hill; but there were few to bless the Chancellor Dalby as he returned in triumph to St. Augustine's after his day's work.

Agreeably to his appointment with Huntingdon, about half-an hour to midnight, Henry Harris turned his steps towards St.

Michael's-hill. To escape observation he chose the least frequented course; there was, however, little necessity for this precaution, as few at any time cared to be found at that hour in the neighbourhood of "The Heretics' Ground," and least of all so soon after two had suffered there. Tales were told, and popularly believed, of lights appearing, and strange figures seen, and unearthly wailings heard by persons, who were compelled to pass near that part of the hill at night, when "Acts of Faith" had taken place there during the day: so that those he met, and who were hastening with nervous steps from the gloomy region, only regarded with surprise and some degree of superstitious fear, the individual apparently bound towards a spot which others were so anxious to avoid.

When the youth had arrived within about two hundred yards of the Heretics' Ground, he was startled to find the popular legend in some measure realised. Near where the stakes stood, and Hale and Allen had suffered that day, two dim and shifting lights barely sufficed to show him several dark figures moving about in grim, spectral-like array. Henry Harris was of a bold disposition, and the truths of the Reformed Faith, which he had secretly received into his bosom, raised him above the superstitions of the day; yet a feeling of dread and awe crept over his frame. The hour, the place, and the recent appalling associations connected with it, all combined to create such a feeling in one so young and susceptible, and living in an age when legends of ghosts were mixed up with those of romance and chivalry; he instinctively moved towards the clump of scathed pine trees, which stood close by, and from behind this shelter watched the dark figures as they flitted to and fro, now stooping as if to collect the ashes which lay strewn about the stakes, and then filing off in slow line, while a low, sad, wailing, melancholy sound arose on the night air, and Henry Harris heard the words as they were borne towards him—

> Hear, Lord, from Heaven thy servants' plaints,
> Receive the ashes of thy martyr'd saints,
> Receive, receive.
> Hear thy persecuted people's cry,
> Stretch out thy hand from Heaven on high,
> And help them, help them, Lord.

Henry Harris had no longer any doubt that they were beings of flesh and blood. Protected by the superstitious tales told of the "Heretics' Ground," some of the more intrepid but persecuted and scattered members of the Reformed Faith were wont secretly to assemble at midnight on the Hill, after any of the brethren had suffered, and collecting the ashes, commit all that remained of the poor martyr to its mother earth. In this sad business they were now engaged for Hale and Allen, and as the little mourning procession passed they continued to chaunt the same low wailing supplication to Heaven. They stopped before a spot not far from the old church, where the earth had been newly turned up; a lantern was then held for one of them to read prayers, and, as the light fell on the face of the bookman, Henry Harris had no difficulty in recognising the marked and intrepid features of Huntingdon.

After a short and fervent prayer, two stone urns were lowered into the earth, accompanied by the same sad words and air—

Hear, Lord, from Heaven thy servants' plaints,
Receive the ashes of thy martyr'd saints,
Receive, receive.

The effect was profoundly solemn and impressive ; the members of a proscribed and persecuted faith had crept forth from their hiding-places at that late hour, and, in that lonely spot, dared amid the dangers which surrounded them to bestow upon the dust of their martyred brethren the last sad rites of sepulture. It was an heroic and a holy act ; and Henry Harris felt that from that moment forward, the poor hunted-down Lutherans had enlisted all his sympathies on their side. While he continued to regard them with rapt interest, not unmixed with awe, he was suddenly and violently seized by some persons, who demanded his business there, and at that hour. Henry, thinking they were emissaries of Dalby, attempted to shake them off; but a dagger placed so close to his breast that it slightly pricked his skin, showed that resistance was worse than vain—it was dangerous.

" Your name ?" demanded one.

" Harris ; I came to see Master Huntingdon."

" Harris !" exclaimed three or four voices at once ; " our bloody enemy ; we are discovered, betrayed." A whistle, not very loud, but shrill, sounded as a signal to those engaged in the business of interment—the lights disappeared and the chaunts ceased.

" Your career of persecution is over," exclaimed a gruff voice close to his ear ; " when we would sacrifice to the injured spirits of the martyrs, behold a ram caught by its horns in a thicket ; your hands helped to pile the faggot ; your blood will serve to slake the ashes."

Henry assured them he was not their persecutor—he was but the son of him against whom they felt so justly indignant.

" Yes," exclaimed his captors : " an acorn from the old oak, or, rather, an offshoot from the old upas tree, destined to bear more malignant fruit."

Huntingdon opportunely arrived to rescue the youth from his captors. " The poor Reformers," said the preacher, as he retired with Harris, " to prevent being surprised in their sad business, must sometimes *act*, you see, as well as *suffer*. But what have you learned of the maiden Maria ? They have not determined upon her death ? We are secretly informed that Hollyman will consent that she suffers no more severe punishment than imprisonment ; if so, better that her body undergo restraint than that her soul be in jeopardy. The hour of deliverance for the persecuted and imprisoned is approaching : the woman Mary Tudor is fast going to her long and final account, and Maria's captivity must soon be at an end."

" I fear me matters are not so well as you suppose," said Harris, who continued with some degree of embarrassment ; " amongst the papers found by Dalby's searchers in Hale's house was a letter from me to Maria. It contained a confession of my faith and love, and will be exhibited in evidence against her by Dalby, who now

intends to demand her trial. My mother wished me to marry a wife of her own choosing, and being this day apprised of the discovery by the Chancellor, declares she will never be satisfied until the 'young heretic witch' is brought to the stake: and my mother is of that stamp which will not be easily turned aside from her victim."

There was a deep sternness in Huntingdon's voice, as he replied, "This, then, young man, is the issue of your thoughtless trifling. Was the season of mourning a fitting time to think of love—or of sadness to think of joy. But I will not blame you," he continued, his voice softening as he spoke, "as soon might we expect to stop vegetation in summer as love in youth."

The preacher passed his hand across his eyes, and a pause of some seconds, which neither seemed disposed to break, followed. At length Huntingdon, as if awaking from some reverie, suddenly inquired "How shall we act?"

"Save the maiden."

"A bold answer only to be effected by boldness."

"According to the rules of the Monastery," said Henry Harris, "the travelling monk and Palmer are permitted to try their polemical prowess against contumacious heretics; in the habit of one or the other I will demand from Bishop Hollyman the usual privilege; and thus gain the cell of Maria, who may escape in my disguise."

Huntingdon shook his head incredulously. "This is the hasty device of a hot brain," said he, "you cannot catch the foxes of Rome in such a flimsy net. The maiden shall be saved, but as *my* plan would involve a long loss of freedom, and perhaps peril her soul, it shall be a *last* resource."

"Why a *last*," demanded Henry, "or if your plan involve consequences so serious, why not permit me to try mine?"

"Try yours then, young man," said the preacher, "but there is great need of coolness and caution; you match your young wit against those who are as wily as old serpents."

Huntingdon having engaged to provide the means of flight, should Maria succeed in escaping from St. Augustine's, Henry Harris departed, having received the reformer's blessing on his efforts.

Chapter III.

Next morning, after the night meeting on St. Michael's-hill between Huntingdon and Henry Harris, an aged Monk, in his long dark cloak and hood, and leaning on a staff, entered under the archway of the gate house of St. Augustine's. He had not proceeded many steps towards the Bishop's Palace, when he was met by Hollyman himself, mounted on a sleek mule, and accompanied by two or three substantial citizens, similarly accommodated, and all evidently bound on a pleasure ride. The Monk lowered his head in obeisance, and approached the Bishop, as he hastily pronounced the benison.

"Well, brother, your business with me," impatiently demanded Hollyman, who evidently relished not any interruption to his promised pleasure.

"Permission," replied the Monk, "to combat the heretical devil with which a maiden now confined in your monastery is, I have heard, possessed."

"Humph," ejaculated Hollyman, "*de gustibus non*—yours is a rare fancy, brother; but the Chancellor must hear your petition. What, ho, there Robin, porter! conduct this holy man to master Dalby."

The monk turned to depart, saying he would wait the Bishop's pleasure; Dalby, however, coming up at the same moment, he was obliged to prefer his prayer to the latter, who, after having put several questions to him, at length granted his request.

As the monk accompanied a sergeant of halberdiers to the cell of the maiden, Dalby followed his retiring steps with a satanic glance of triumph, and at length burst out into a loud discordant laugh, exclaiming, "That simple boy would, forsooth, measure his shallow wit with mine; ha, ha; mine is too old an eye to mistake a dove for a pigeon, or his fresh baby face for a monk's, merely because he wears a hood. But I must follow my pretty bird to its cage," said the Chancellor, and he walked off with a gratified air.

As soon as the halberdier had closed the door of the cell on the pseudo Monk and the poor captive, the former threw back his hood and discovered to Maria the well-known features of Henry Harris. An exclamation of surprise burst from the girl's lips, which, had not the guard been out of hearing, must have led to their discovery. Love and pity filled the young man's breast as he beheld the colourless beauty of a cheek upon which captivity had left its trace. He had, not, however, been many moments with her when the blood rallied into every feature, and the expression of her deep hazel eye showed that amid all her sufferings she still retained a tender recollection of him. When he mentioned the object and purpose of his visit, and urged her to assume his disguise without delay, she firmly refused. What! to leave him there to the mercy of Dalby, a substitute for her: she would never consent to adopt so selfish a course: she could meet persecution, she could endure suffering, she could go to the stake, but she could never consent to escape *thus*, and leave another—leave him—behind to suffer."

It was in vain that the youth assured her that there was no danger to him—that he ran no risk, and that he would be liberated almost as soon as discovered. She was still firm; and it was not until he declared his determination, if she persisted in her refusal, to remain with her also, that she at length reluctantly consented to adopt his disguise. He wrapped her in his long cloak, and having prayed for her deliverance and kissed her cheek, withdrew into a recess of the cell, so as to avoid the notice of the guard.

With an agitated hand Maria, in her new garb, knocked at the door of the cell, as Henry had instructed her. No answer was turned, and she knocked again and louder than before; when the key grated in the lock from the outside—the door was opened, she passed the sergeant, and Henry, with a silent prayer of thanks, heard the bolt shoot once more into its staple, and he was left alone.

Leaning on her staff, and shrouded in her long cloak, Maria pursued her course towards the gate house; her agitation was a

little increased by hearing footsteps following in the rear, but as those after a while did not appear to gain on her, she became reassured. She had now approached within a few yards of the gate house; the wicket was open, and the fat porter lolling lazily against one side of the archway, looking out upon those who passed and re-passed in the Green on business or pleasure. Maria saw them also through the opened gateway, and this, the first glimpse of freedom, fell with a refreshing influence on eyes whose vision was so long bounded by the narrow limits of a cell. Her step quickened as she neared the gate—her fear of failure increasing with her chances of success. She trembled for the loss of liberty, as liberty seemed the more certain. A horseman stood before the gate, and she could recognise in the rider the intrepid Huntingdon; her heart throbbed with hope as she entered under the archway: she was too much excited to hear the footsteps, which dogged her slowly before, now fast gaining on her, and the next moment, ere she had reached the outer gate, she was in the arms, and once more in the power, of the Chancellor Dalby.

He had tracked his poor victim from her very cell, and, with the same malignant pleasure that a tiger plays with its prey, permitted her to escape so far. He gratified his cruel disposition by suffering her to raise the cup of liberty to her very lips, and then dashing it down as she believed she was about to taste it.

After Maria left the cell in her disguise, Henry listened with an anxious ear for every sound, fearing that each moment the door would open, and the maiden, captured in her attempt to escape, be again thrust back into confinement. But the minutes as they passed gave him confidence, for every stir the hand made forward on the dial's face placed an increased distance, he thought, between her and her persecutors. At length a quarter of an hour had passed, and he began to breathe freely; she must by this time, he said, have escaped far beyond their reach, and Dalby is disappointed of his victim. A feeling of pride and triumph sprung up in the young man's breast as he fancied himself the deliverer, at some personal risk, of one whom he loved.

He heard footsteps approaching across the flagged pavement which led to the cell: the bolts were withdrawn, and he was confronted by Chancellor Dalby. The latter was unaccompanied by any person. Henry, therefore, concluded that all cause for alarm was past.

"Ha!" said Dalby, feigning surprise, "*you* here."

"Yes," replied the young man, proud of the act which he had performed, and of having overreached one so crafty as the Chancellor. "Here, sir, at your pleasure."

"And the maiden?"

"Escaped from her cruel persecutor. You would have racked her tender limbs: now try your infernal engine upon mine—they are stronger, and will endure more than hers."

"I am well minded," said Dalby, with a cold sneer, "to take you, young man, at your word, and give you a taste of what you ask for: but your presumption is already punished, and I have two birds instead of one in the cage."

"What! has not the maiden then escaped?"

"Did you hope, shallow boy, to overreach me? Is this grizzled head no sign of wisdom or experience that you fancied the Chancellor Dalby might be outdone by a stripling; that I could mistake your baby face for a monk's under the poor disguise of a black hood? I did not allow your little heretical leman to fly a few yards without first having secured a string to her leg: and when she fondly thought she was about to spread her wings for flight and freedom, *I drew her back* once more to her cage. Ha! ha! what think you now, young man, of your notable scheme?"

Henry seemed stupefied for a moment by this intelligence. He then, without saying a single word, sprung upon Dalby, but the youth had over-calculated his strength; Dalby dashed him back with infinite ease, and, quitting the cell, told him, as he closed the door, "to try his strength against *that*."

The Chancellor's triumph, however, was not yet complete; he next visited Maria's cell. "I have seen your paramour," said he, as he entered, while the blood rushed into the poor maiden's pale cheek at this rude insult, "and as I knew you were interested in his weal, I called to inform you that he has ample time to digest and consider the pious and instructive homilies which you have preached to him."

"Oh, sir, blame him not," cried the maiden in a tone of anguish, "for he is not to blame. If fault there be any, it must be mine, and punish me alone."

"You will find the sacred tribunal ready enough to grant your request," retorted the Chancellor, in that deliberate tone which men, whose hearts are steeled against humanity, can only affect, "and I see not why we should be more lenient to the devil under the guise of a young maiden than in the form of an old man. Oh! it is such heretics as you the church has to fear. The arguments of old men are cold; but it is the eloquence of young red pouting lips which make apostates. The true faith has more to fear from such fair-faced enemies than even from the old heresiarch Luther himself."

The maiden answered not this tirade, but raised her eyes meekly towards heaven. Dalby's glance was fixed on her; and as her face met his, he started as though some spectre had suddenly risen before him. He gazed on her pale face for a moment, then passing his hand across his forehead, he muttered to himself, "Psha, what a foolish fancy!" He left the cell in silence.

As the Chancellor walked moodily from that part of the monastery where Maria was confined, a stranger approached him unobserved from the chapter-house. On perceiving him, Dalby uncovered and saluted him with a low deferential bend of the body. The stranger had no very imposing appearance; he was not much Dalby's superior in years; but in the implacable ascetic cast of his features, and the cold relentless expression of his grey eye, he so far surpassed the Chancellor, that even that functionary looked almost amiable beside him. He was coarsely dressed, a black serge cap confined his grey hairs, and he wore a long cloak of the same material.

"We are come to visit our faithful fellow servants of the holy church in Bristol," said the stranger, "and to stir up the zeal of our brother Hollyman, of whom we have heard some complaint." Dalby bowed low as he replied, "The church need not fear when so able a champion as Bishop Bonner is active for her interests."

Bonner (for it was he) paid a short compliment to Dalby's zeal, and then gave the Chancellor to understand that having heard of Hollyman's indifference, he had secretly paid a visit to Bristol to see and judge for himself.

Bonner and Dalby walked forward in silence, the latter continuing uncovered all the time, and seemingly engrossed in deep thoughts. At length the Bishop turning round, said, in a sharp disagreeable tone, "I see by the notice of accusation in the chapter-house, that a young maiden is confined in your monastery, and about to be brought to trial on a charge of heresy. It is well, it is well: those who serve the successors of St. Peter should be, like his sword, inexorable and undistinguishing between the blood of the young and the blood of the old. It is well, it is well: since the heretics will compel us to sacrifice, it is better that the victim we offer be young and fair than old and decrepid and with blemish. It will be the more acceptable."

Bonner looked with his cold grey eye towards Dalby, expecting the Chancellor's assent to this ruthless speech; but the latter seemed occupied with some engrossing thought, almost benumbing, that had suddenly got possession of him.

The Bishop heeded not his companion's abstracted manner, but continued, "I will preside at her trial this night; and though the young witch were as fair as Susanna, she shall find what it is to have Bonner for her judge."

Dalby again bowed low, and with the air of one who hardly appeared to have heard the Bishop's speech, deferentially inquired the latter's pleasure. "That the heretical maiden," returned Bonner with impatience, "be brought before me for trial this night."

Dalby hesitated for a moment, and there was perplexity in his manner as he replied, "Had we not better dispose of this case ourselves, and not trouble one whose time is of such value to the Church and his Queen?"

"In no duty can I afford myself more satisfaction or the State more service," replied Bonner; and then waving his hand authoritatively, he parted from Dalby, and passing the porter walked forth into the Green.

As the Bishop sauntered slowly towards the chapel of St. Mark, a citizen in a flowing wig, and wearing a black patch on his cheek, accosted him with a low salutation. "*Benedicite*, friend," said Bonner. "Humph," said the citizen, as he walked on, "those lips were never made for blessing."

. . . . . .

About an hour before midnight, the thoughts of Dalby and Huntingdon were occupied by the same object, but under different circumstances. The Reformed Preacher was at that moment engaged in earnest and anxious conversation with two others in a

small apartment of an almost ruinous house under Newgate. On a table which, with a bench or two, was the only furniture in the room, lay a ring, a parchment, and a rosary, which the speakers frequently took in their hands or pointed to as they spoke. "It is *the last* resource," said Huntingdon, "and though it may prove successful, it is not the less a bitter one."

"Be guided by one who has been in sorer straits than this, Master Huntingdon," said an old man whose eye was dim, but whose wrinkled features still preserved strong marks of serenity and decision. "Interfere not between the maiden and Him who can save when men most despair. Leave her to Heaven, even to death, but deliver not her soul to the Chancellor Dalby."

Huntingdon shook his head as he said "Were the maiden my own, I would know how to act, but she has been confided by a dying parent to my trust: and were that mother alive, I cannot think she would permit the faggots to be piled round her child's limbs, while she possessed those tokens—the means of saving her."

"But stay," said the old man, "why act precipitately with a desperate remedy, while other hopes remain?"

"I see none," replied Huntingdon, "that would warrant me to delay a moment. With Hollyman there was hope; even with Dalby there might be hope, but with Bonner there can be none; when I passed him to-day he looked as he looked when he tore out the poor weaver's beard, and held the man's hand in the lamp.* No, no; I will not dare to delay my last resource, when the devil no longer acts through deputy but does his work himself."

No further remonstrance was made by the old man, and Huntingdon proceeded to enclose the ring, rosary, and parchment in a packet, to which he added another small scroll, which he took from his girdle, and on which was written the superscription—"*Let the receipt of this packet be acknowledged by three strokes from the Tower bell, to be an assurance to the ear of the unknown bearer that his message has not failed.*"

A few minutes afterwards the packet was in the hands of a servant of the Monastery, to whom Huntingdon delivered it, with an earnest injunction to have it conveyed with instant diligence to the Chancellor Dalby.

The messenger directed his steps towards the Chancellor's apartments, and muttered to himself, as he endeavoured to ascertain the contents of the packet by feeling it between his fingers, "Good sooth, yonder master was in a notable hurry to have a rosary and, I'll be sworn, some trumpery conveyed to the Chancellor, who'd sooner see the face of a heretic than a hundred relics."

"What ho, Maurice, grumbling," said a rough voice, accosting him, "not had your evening's stoup, I suppose; but come along with me; the Bishop's buttery is never without something to make

* We have it on the authority of both Fox and Burnet that Bonner used sometimes to whip the Protestant prisoners with his own hands, till he was tired with the violence of the exercise; that he tore out the beard of a weaver, who refused to relinquish his religion, and in order to give the recusant a more sensible idea of burning, held his finger to the candle until the sinews and veins shrunk and burst!

a servant of St. Augustine's smile. King Henry (Heaven assoil him for it) has spoiled the refectory, but not the buttery; come along, come along, Maurice."

"Nay, nay, I pray thy pardon, compeer Robin," replied the other; "I have this packet to deliver from some powder-wig to the Chancellor Dalby; though I would much sooner my message lay towards the buttery."

Robin, with the curiosity of persons in his station, felt the packet. "Pooh, man," exclaimed he, "'tis but a rosary, the message can't be urgent; and besides, the Chancellor only passed me just now towards the cell of the young heretic. Gadzooks, Maurice, but it is a pity to make a fire of such a pretty piece of wench flesh: but that's no business of ours. Come in, come in, the Chancellor will not thank you for disturbing him now, he has other fish to *fry*, ha! ha! instead of counting an old rosary; and you know you might as well disturb a tiger when devouring its prey, as the Chancellor when worrying a heretic."

Maurice suffered himself, under these arguments, to be led by his friend, and both were soon engaged over a bottle of Hollyman's canary, indifferent and oblivious to all the world but themselves.

Dalby was otherwise occupied at the same moment. As he entered the maiden's cell with a lamp in his hand, the poor girl was not a little amazed to see that a great change had come over the expression of his countenance. It was still as unprepossessing as ever, but, instead of the cold Satanic sneer which dwelt on it before, a haggardness and anxiety marked every feature. "Maiden," exclaimed he, in an excited tone, lowering the lamp to her face and gazing fixedly on her, "who are you?"

Maria, unable to bear the light, or look on the strange unearthly expression of her persecutor's countenance, shaded her eyes with her hands and answered not. Dalby, in a tone louder and fiercer than before, demanded, "Who are you, speak? Are you the daughter of the old man, Hale?"

"Where is he?" inquired the maiden.

"His soul is with his arch patron, and his ashes on the winds."

"Monster, fiend," cried Maria, her whole frame trembling with agitation, "have you murdered my father—have you violently hastened his quiet passage to the grave? Fiend, did you think that death delayed too long, that you must anticipate old age and sorrow, which would too soon have done their work on his white hairs? He *was* my father, and may the malediction of his child rest upon his murderer!"

"Thy father?"

"Yes, fiend."

"Where is thy mother?" inquired Dalby, not noticing the maiden's indignation.

"Died a few months since, and happily before she could feel thy cruelty."

"It is well," said Dalby, musingly to himself: "I knew it was a foolish fancy: in a world where there are so many faces, some will be alike." Then, turning towards Maria, he said, "Maiden, recant, and I will save you."

"Where is my father?" exclaimed the maiden, without answering Dalby.

"He died a contumacious heretic, as he lived."

"Then in the same faith will his daughter follow him. I will not receive life from the hands which are stained with the blood of my parent. When his old limbs did not totter under the burden of your persecutions, young and strong as I am, I should be ashamed to shrink from the load."

The black cloud again passed over Dalby's countenance, as he exclaimed, "Then, perverse heretic, meet your fate," and immediately quitted the cell.

Dalby had not long departed when two officers of the monastery entered, and bandaging the eyes of the maiden, conducted her for the second time to the secret tribunal. Bonner, who presided, looked with an unmoved eye towards her, as he sneeringly observed, "A fair form to enshrine an heretical heart." On either side of Bonner sat Hollyman and Dalby, far surpassed, however, by the master spirit of persecution, who occupied the supreme place in the secret court. Hollyman seemed the very impersonation of mercy, and Dalby not quite a fiend, compared with the pet Bishop of Mary Tudor. Hollyman evidently did not relish the duty, and the Chancellor was pale, and never once looked towards the maiden.

"Girl," said Bonner, in his harsh, grating voice, "I have promised to allow you to live if you give up the devil and undergo severe penance for six months. What say you?"

"If you mean," replied the maiden, with an undaunted tone, "that I should forego the true faith for a church which has murdered my parent—whose altars are red with the blood of the saints—whose dungeons are"——

"Gag the she-fiend," cried out Bonner, his eyes glaring and the muscles of his throat swollen with rage; "gag her, and stop those blasphemies." Then, turning to Maria, he shouted, "Witch, will you recant?"

"No," replied Maria, calm tranquil resolution depicted on her pale features.

"Then we'll try the torture. Though hold," said he, as the officious Claude was about to advance, "I will try a way of my own; I have known those who would not blench under the rack wince from the fire. Maiden, approach."

Maria approached, and Bonner, laying hold of her arm, thrust her hand into the lamp, which stood before him. Maria, as soon as she felt the flame, drew back with a shriek of pain. "Ha!" exclaimed Bonner, "will you recant?"

"No," replied Maria, her lips quivering with the acute anguish which she felt.

Hollyman rose from his place with a look of indignation and disgust, and even Dalby seemed disposed to help to raise Maria from the ground to which she had fallen; but Bonner, casting an unfeeling glance towards the poor girl, with a cruel relentless calmness of tone, merely remarked, "Let the last sentence against confirmed heretics be carried into execution by break of day; for should a weak public witness the sight they might give trouble."

Hollyman and Dalby followed Bonner up the stone stairs of the "Secret Court," the Chancellor turning to cast a meaning and anxious glance back upon the reviving form of Maria.

. . . . . .

While these fearful scenes were taking place in the subterraneous courts of the Monastery, and in the dead hour of the night, Huntingdon, with an anxious step and attentive ear, was pacing the Green without, waiting for the signal which was to announce the receipt of his important packet by one within the ancient walls. But the quarters flew by, and still the old tower above him was silent, though he often turned his ear towards it, fancying, with a quickened sense of hearing, that he could distinguish the creaking of the pullies preparatory to the striking of the three expected strokes. It was only fancy; and the Reformer resumed his anxious and lone round in silence and disappointment. Still, however, he would stop in his solitary walk again and again, to cast a look at the old square tower which rose like a giant into the star-light above him, expecting every moment to hear it speak to him with its loud solemn voice, and receive the much wished for answer from its iron tongue—yet all in vain. While thus waiting he heard the footsteps of the night watch approaching, and retired behind a large elm to escape observation. Just then the bell struck out; Huntingdon's heart beat loudly within him, but it soon sunk again, for the peal was but that prolonged one which indicated the hour of midnight. Still he continued to listen and watch—until a slight grey streak in the eastern sky announced the coming of dawn. "Day approaches," murmured the preacher, "Dalby cannot have received the packet, and I might better lie down between the lion and tiger than enter the building where Bonner and the Chancellor are. To a brother I can only reveal myself with safety, and to him, after years of separation, I can now alone apply. Bonner is an expeditious murderer and there is need of haste."

The preacher turned from the spot and, passing rapidly through a line of narrow streets, was soon before the small priory which joined the church of St. James, and which, though suppressed by Henry, was now inhabited by a few zealous monks from the parent Abbey of Tewkesbury. Huntingdon having pulled the gate-bell, it was answered by one of the brotherhood. "Henry!" said Huntingdon. The monk drew back, and holding the lanthorn which he carried between himself and the speaker, exclaimed, "I know the voice, but that is not the face of my straying brother." Huntingdon pulled the patch from his cheek, and was as instantaneously recognised by the monk, who, in a tone in which natural affection struggled with monastic austerity, upbraided him for his opposition to the true faith, while he enjoined him to escape from danger which he so recklessly dared.

"Time presses, brother," said Huntingdon, "I want your aid, and will therefore wave all controversy for the present. In yonder monastery a father is perhaps now sitting in judgment on his own child. I would have warned the wretched man, but I fear my message has failed; to you instant admission will be given, and

as you would not have a horrid sin committed, rush between that cruel Chancellor and his child."

"What mean you by these appalling words, brother?"

"Nay, tarry not for explanation; Bonner is quick in his bloody work; the packet will explain all. Dalby's first love, if such a monster may be said to have love, was a Protestant maiden, whom his bigotry forced to take refuge with her child amongst her own people, where she died; and her last injunction to those to whom she committed her infant was, to keep its existence unknown to its unnatural parent, as she would not have it delivered up to the darkness and bigotry of Dalby. We followed her dying request, and in the family of her humble fosterers the child flourished into womanhood, until the implacable spirit of"—

"Hark," interrupted the monk, "there is her death knell. That peal is never heard from St. Augustine's but when a heretic is about to suffer."

The humane monk stopped not to speak another word, but hurried in his sandalled feet towards the Cathedral, the ominous tolling continuing all the time. As he reached the gateway, a few early stragglers, attracted by the sound, had collected near it: the monk passed them and the surly porter, and reached the cloisters as the horrid procession was being formed in the area under the immediate supervision of Bonner himself, who always took peculiar pleasure in witnessing those cruel scenes. The maiden between two halberdiers, and followed by Dalby, was being brought forward into the centre, when the monk threw himself in their way, having merely breath from his haste to exclaim, "Stop—she is thy child!"

Though this did not appear to be addressed to Dalby, it was but the confirmation of the impression which he could not force from his mind. He staggered like one drunk for a moment, and then recovering himself, as one of his unfeeling nature could only do, advanced to Bonner and demanded, as the maiden's father, that she be delivered up to him.

"Pooh," said Bonner, "let a heretic slip through my fingers, for the wanderings of this mad Monk—where are the proofs?"

Dalby's parental feelings, dull as they were, were moved by Bonner's reply. He turned upon the Bishop with a countenance of rage and agitation as he exclaimed, "Before you can tear my child from me, you must learn to drag its cub from the lion."

"The proofs," said Bonner.

"The packet," said the Monk.

"Gadzooks," hiccupped Maurice, reeling forth from Hollyman's buttery, "Here's a packet."

Dalby opened the packet, and the rosary and the ring, which he had given his wife years before, rolled out.

Bonner had his proofs, and Dalby, armed with a father's authority, committed his daughter to a Convent.

. . . . . .

On the morning of the 17th November, a little more than a year after the incidents related in the foregoing, the honest burghers of

Bristol were surprised by the noisy joy-peals which burst forth from every steeple in the "ancient citie," announcing to a delighted people that the dread and disastrous reign of Mary Tudor had ceased, and the golden days of good Queen Bess commenced. None heard the glad intelligence with greater gratification than the poor hunted down Reformers, who emerged from their hiding places, and followed their own faith without dread of fire or sword. St. Augustine's Monastery changed its tenants, Dalby fled into exile, and Huntingdon, mid crowds of happy faces, had the pleasure of uniting Maria and Henry Harris beneath the old Cathedral pile. The persecuting Aldermen worshipped the rising sun, and changed their creed with their Queen.

And the "blood of the Martyrs proved the seed of the Church."

Pitch and Pay.

A TALE OF THE PLAGUE OF BRISTOL IN 1645.

On the Stoke side of Durdham Down, there is a rustic lane conducting to the residence of Mr. Charles Thomas, and some new villas built on part of the Sneyd Park Estate, which, with the farm to which it formerly led, was called "*Pitch and Pay.*" There are two or three explanations given of this curious designation, but the one most likely, and received, is that it was so called from there being a wooden bar or stile at the head of the lane next the Down, which the writer remembers, and which, when Bristol was afflicted with the plague in 1645, served as a line of separation between the citizens who went out to purchase food there, and the country people, who, owing to the pestilence, would come no nearer to the infected city than this point. It was said that the peasants and farmers brought provisions, and placed them at one side of the bar, refusing to come nearer the townspeople or touch them, and the latter threw over the money to the country folk, who took it up and went their ways. The spot obtained, from this circumstance of their throwing the money over, the name of *Pitch and Pay.* There is now a lodge at the entrance of the lane, but it is only a few years since the wooden bar, or, at least, a wooden bar or stile, stood there in all its original rusticity. The spot, as the local reader is aware, commands a lovely and expansive view of the Channel and the river banks, with Leigh Court on the opposite side. An old and noted country inn, called "the Ostrich," stood not far from *Pitch and Pay*, on the site of the present Down House. In the year to which I refer, namely, April, 1645, to February, 1646, over 3,000 persons died of the plague—an awful amount, considering the population of Bristol at that time, further thinned by two sieges, the last of which, when the city was taken by Fairfax and Cromwell from Prince Rupert, took place in September, 1645.

Before the rupture between King Charles I. and his Parliament occurred, and ere any of the animosities, political or religious, attendant upon that disastrous conflict were known, there resided in Corn Street two substantial citizens, both in trade, who were not only near neighbours but attached friends. John Ashurst was a pelterer: he dealt extensively in skins; William Houghton was a draper, and each was equally prosperous in business. In the early struggle to get on they gave one another a helping hand, and when they attained to comparative affluence together, they moderately enjoyed the fruits of their prosperity. Business over for the evening, they would, according to the fashion of the time, play at bowls or archery together on the Marsh or the Butts, or smoke a pipe and take a glass of sack in the bowers of one of the suburban taverns, that then dotted the banks of the river towards the Hotwells. They both married, but not until they had made a tolerable advance towards middle life—were, in fact, old bachelors: they would "get something to fil the mouths before they got the mouths to fill." Houghton was the first to take a wife, who, some twelvemonths after their union, made him the happy father of a fine

boy. Ashurst quickly followed the example of his neighbour and crony, and a little girl, in less than a year, made her appearance to confer upon the honest pelterer the honours of paternity.

The evening companions of the Corn Street tradesmen amused themselves, when they met at bowls or over their pipes in the Hotwells taverns, by suggesting that Dame Fortune herself had regulated this happy distinction of sexes in the two little strangers, that there might be a union in one lucky couple of the wealth of both parents. They joked Houghton and Ashurst upon the circumstance, and said that, according to the fashion of allied monarchs, they ought to at once have a betrothal of babies. It seemed as if fate had determined that what was said in fun should become fact—and we know many a true word has been spoken in jest. After three or four years, the two tradesmen were left widowers, each the father of only one child. Then, indeed, the friends, who in their bereavement drew closer to one another and became, if possible, more constant companions, began to talk seriously of the possibility of their respective fortunes being combined in one, by the union of the two children when they grew up into manhood and womanhood. The fancy pleased them and they dwelt upon it, as the children played about the room, and amused themselves and their elders.

But, alas! the course of baby love, any more than of the passion of adults, never does run smooth. King Charles fell out with his Parliament, and the struggle which rent the kingdom commenced, dividing kindred, neighbours, and families. Houghton and Ashurst held different views in politics, but had it not been for this unhappy civil war would probably never have had the slightest dissension upon the subject. Houghton was of a Republican and Puritan turn of mind; while Ashurst held by the King, believing him divinely appointed, and all who opposed his views guilty of rebellion. Still, though some warm discussions occasionally took place between them, it was not until the contest was shifted to Bristol itself, that the long friendship of the two tradesmen seemed to be seriously perilled. When Fiennes with the Parliamentarians was admitted to the city, Ashurst opposed, and Houghton supported the application for admission; and when afterwards Yeamans and Boucher were executed by the Puritans, Ashurst nearly compromised himself with the ruling powers by the manner in which he denounced that bloody act. Indeed, he would probably have fallen under Fiennes' serious displeasure, but for the secret interposition of Houghton, who, however, lost all merit in Ashurst's eyes by defending the act as one of state necessity. "Foul murder a state necessity," exclaimed Ashurst, indignantly; "out on you, William Houghton: we have long been friends, and had dreams of making those ties of friendship closer through our children; but though we were tied together by our heart-strings, I would snap them asunder, sooner than longer hold the acquaintance of a man who defends a double murder. We no longer know one another," and he left Houghton's house in a passion.

Houghton was deeply grieved at the severance, and would have willingly made it up, but Ashurst passed him in the street without

recognition, and when his little daughter Mary was about to rush from the shop to take Master Houghton by the hand as he walked by, her father called her peremptorily back, adding a bitter remark, that his old friend might "see some state necessity to murder her." Houghton heard the observation and felt it.

Ashurst's time, however, to show magnanimity was at hand. The Royal troops approached the city, and, after a faint-hearted defence by Fiennes, Prince Rupert's "Hearts of Fame" broke through the defences and became masters of Bristol. The loyal pelterer's joy was at its height, and being naturally the kindest of men, with victory came forgiveness of wrongs real or fancied. He started off at once for Houghton's shop, not to taunt him or triumph over him, but to offer him his hand and assistance, should he require it now that the city was held by his opponents. But he found Houghton in no humour to receive in a right spirit his advances. The Puritan draper was annoyed and mortified beyond measure at the surrendry of the city, and declined Ashurst's proffered friendship, tendered, he asserted, under the proud guise of patronage. Ashurst again held out his hand, but Houghton sullenly left his shop, and shut himself up in his back parlour.

It would have been better for Ashurst personally had the Royal cause never triumphed in Bristol, for the Royal exchequer was so low that the friends of the King, who had means, were either compelled to lend him money or see his armies want. Ashurst was not a man to hold back his cash when his heart was in a cause, and he made such advances to Charles when he held Bristol, that, when Rupert's troops marched out of the Royal Fort and surrendered the place to Cromwell and Fairfax, the pelterer was so reduced in circumstances that he had not enough to enable him and his little girl to quit the city, as many other loyal families had done, and reside without labour for a little time elsewhere.

Houghton was more careful of his means, and neither friend nor foe were able to induce him to part with the fortune he had accumulated with such pains. Of Ashurst's losses he was not aware, and having so abruptly refused his good offices when Rupert entered the place, he was (now that the Parliament was again successful) ashamed to call on the loyal pelterer, lest his own bad temper might be retorted on him. Soon after Houghton went to reside on a little property which he had purchased near Shirehampton, the old neighbours having in point of fact seen little of one another for a considerable time.

At length the awful rumour got afloat that the terrible plague had shown itself in Bristol—Bristol already wasted with siege and famine. Like a wildfire the report spread throughout all the adjacent country. The rural population, with a terror increased by ignorance, looked towards the city as a doomed place and refused to approach it, so that the want of provisions was aggravating the devastation of pestilence. Superstition was adding, too, to the real horrors of the stricken town: a cloud, the country people said, could be seen always resting over the place, and the peasants, who climbed the heights of Knowle and Dundry, shuddered as they

looked down upon it and fancied they saw, in the dull smoke that naturally canopied a large collection of houses, a cloud charged with plague and pestilence.

Houghton, in his comfortable little cottage, with its lawn and orchard, down by the banks of the Avon, heard of the sufferings of the citizens, and endeavoured to send in some provisions to friends he knew there, but his messengers, afraid to enter the place, either disposed of them before they got there or brought them back again, and invented stories of the parties to whom he sent them having left or died. On of those to whom he sent was Ashurst; but Ashurst, they reported, had quitted Bristol on the first appearance of the plague.

Chapter II.

Thus stood matters one autumn morning, when a girl, about sixteen years of age, with a face of almost angelic loveliness but worn with lines of early affliction, might be seen crossing the Down towards the rustic gate or stile leading from the open common to the green lane that conducted the traveller, by a short cut, to the little hamlet of Stoke. The girl had walked from the direction of the city, and was only one of a straggling line of persons, all evidently come from the same quarter and bound for the same point. It was a fine morning, and the view of the Channel and the old manor-houses reposing amidst their great trees that dotted the vale that lay between the Down and the river, would have elicited the admiration of any but a careworn and sickly crowd, who had left a plague-stricken city to purchase provisions at the prescribed point, and having purchased them at a price they could ill afford to pay, must again trudge back with weary feet to abodes amidst which the angel of death was busy. Poor Mary Ashurst (for it was the pelterer's daughter, now grown up towards womanhood), as she threw back her hood to feel the morning breeze on her face, had snatched a moment's observation from her own heavy cares to notice that the birds that hopped on the branches of the trees as she passed, were very silent.* "Poor things," she mused to herself, "they say you sympathise with human suffering; and, if so, God knows there is little matter for joyful song on this earth of sorrow and sin: though we should not repine, for Heaven has given us a Paradise, though man has defiled and devastated it." Mary had left that morning, for the first time for some days, the side of her father's sick pallet: for before Ashurst could quit the city the plague appeared, and he was one of those attacked. Nothing but the devotion of his daughter, under Providence, had saved his life, and though he was one of the few to recover from the attack, he was still so weak that she feared he must sink under the after-consequences. The little money left him had been nearly spent, and they were now residing in poor lodgings in a little house off the Horsefair in St. James's. With the view of getting some

* It is said, probably it is a mere fancy, that the birds are mute in the neighbourhood of a place where pestilence prevails. It was noticed, even by persons of education, that when the cholera was in the South of Ireland the singing birds were very silent.

fresher provisions, and at a more moderate rate than she could obtain them in the city, which none of the country people would enter, she got up early and proceeded with her scanty supply of money to *Pitch and Pay*. Though sore chastened, her young heart was full of religion; and as she thought of happier days when her loved father, now low on a bed of sickness, was a leading and substantial citizen and, the day's work done, he nursed his little Mary in his arms on the summer's evening by his shop door, she drew a deep sigh, but said, at the same time, "The Lord's will be done; the sorrows of this world are but for a time, the joys of Heaven are eternal."

The scene by the rustic gate at *Pitch and Pay* was novel and exciting, and nothing could offer a greater contrast than the appearance of the people on either side of the wooden bar which separated the town from the country folks. Gaunt want and pallid sickness were written on the faces of the former, while health and plenty were legible in ruddy characters on the countenances of the latter. On the *country* side were baskets of vegetables, fruit, poultry, eggs, butter, household bread, &c., which were being rapidly emptied, and the contents delivered piecemeal under the bar, after being first held up to view by the sellers and the bargain made. The townspeople, in return, threw the money over the bar: the coin was not at once picked up by the peasants and farmers, but allowed to remain on the ground until sprinkled with some disinfecting fluid, which it was thought would remove any danger, should the money previously have been in the possession of a plague-stricken person.

Poor Mary was frightened by the crowd, the crush, and confusion near the bar, for great public calamities make people selfish and indifferent to others. When she attempted to get to the stile, some others crowded before her and pushed her back, and as the provisions were being quickly bought up, it is probable she would have returned empty-handed to Bristol, but that a youth, little more than her own age, and who from his dress appeared to be the son of a better-class farmer, called out to her, and asked her what she wanted. Mary's wants were small, as was her money. A little fruit, a brown loaf, and a chicken, the luxuries required for her sick father, were all she asked. He held up the articles, and several rushed towards that part of the bar behind which he stood, but he waved them back, and said they were for the young maid with the red hood. Mary asked the price, and the youth demanded less than half the sum she thought she would have to pay. He inquired her name, and on hearing it would take nothing, telling her to come the next day and he would have a better supply for her. But Mary persisted in paying, threw the money over the bar, and returned with her welcome stock.

The fruit and the chicken had a visible effect in restoring Ashurst's health; but next morning, when Mary was about to start again for "Pitch and Pay," she suddenly felt ill, and a cold perspiration breaking out on her body with a sensation of pain under the arm, only too plainly convinced her that the deadly disease had found her out.

Young John Houghton (for the youth who had behaved so liberally to Mary was the draper's son, and had come up with a farm servant to the bar to sell provisions) was early at "Pitch and Pay," and eagerly looking out for Mary's red hood: for he had heard his father speak of his old friend Ashurst, and of their being separated by party feeling, and he was anxious by further inquiry to convince himself if the lovely but care-worn girl was a relation of the Bristol pelterer, his father's old neighbour. Strange to say, however, he did not mention to his father the adventure of the preceding day, perhaps being conscious in his own mind that a good deal of the interest he felt in the matter was inspired by the gentle and touching beauty of the poor girl herself. If he had any doubt upon the subject, it must have been dispelled by the feeling of disappointment which he experienced when, having waited the best part of the morning, no red hood appeared amongst the crowd. Still he would not part with the full basket of ripe fruit, poultry, and vegetables which he had brought with him, and when all the rest had gone, he determined to go into the city—though he had not been there since the plague broke out—and endeavour to find where the Ashursts lived, for his heart was filled with apprehension lest any ill had befallen Mary. He sent the servant back, for it was vain to hope that the man would accompany him, and warning him not to say where he had gone, he started for Bristol with some of the best of the provisions.

As he approached the walls of the plague-stricken city, what a contrast did it present to its former appearance. Keeping the road by Redland, he left on his right the melancholy little town of pest-huts, which had been erected on the eastern side of the Park (now known as Tyndall's Park), for those afflicted with the fearful malady. Young Houghton shuddered as he looked towards the gloomy colony of death, and thought how many were then in the last agonies under those pointed and pitch-covered roofs. Frome Gate was open, but there was no busy passing to and fro under its portal: a single sentry, with a pale face, paced up and down inside it. Christmas-street appeared quite desolate, and as he passed under St. John's gateway, the view up Broad-street might have been a view in Baalbec or Palmyra in the Desert. Two or three people walking along, with medicated handkerchiefs or disinfecting phials to their noses, were all he saw: no carriages, no vehicles of conveyance or commerce. As he got to the top of the street, a few people were hurrying round the corner of Christ Church, as if flying from something in Wine-street, and on turning into that once thronged and busy thoroughfare, he was horrified to see a large black covered litter, standing before one of the doors, and some person, wrapped in blankets, being brought out of the house and placed in it. There was no mistaking it: it was the "plague litter;" that which, when it made its appearance in a street, spread panic amongst, and sent the blood from the cheeks of its inhabitants. Houghton drawing in his breath so that he should not inhale the air as he passed this melancholy conveyance, hurried by, and having learnt some particulars as to the Ashursts' probable place of residence from a friend in Narrow Wine-street, he proceeded

to the Horsefair. He saw three men standing in St. James's Churchyard, and went up to make inquiries of them, and was horrified to find them standing by a great pit, into which they were shaking quicklime. They were the sexton's assistants, and had already lowered during the day twenty bodies of those who died from the plague into the pit. From them, however, he learnt the exact place of Ashurst's residence, and, walking across the Horsefair, knocked at the door of a small house up a little court. He was kept standing for some time, when an emaciated face, nearly covered with hair, the eyes sunk in the sockets, peered down with an anxious look upon him. "Does Master Ashurst live here?" inquired Houghton. "I am that man," answered the person in the window. "How is your daughter?" "Better," replied her father; "that is," he added, with evident trepidation and alarm, "she will be better by and bye; for God's sake, leave her to my care, I will tend upon her; but she must die if you bear her off to those sad pest-houses. Poor Mary, she watched over me, I am able to watch over her; deprive me not of that sad gratification."

Houghton gathered with horror, from this speech, that the young girl was plague-stricken; and that her father spoke manifestly under the impression that he was a messenger from the pest-houses come to remove her; so he immediately relieved the old man's mind. "I am not come from the pest-house," he said, "but from the country; and bring a few fresh fruits for your daughter and yourself." Ashurst immediately descended and opened the door, and Houghton accompanied him upstairs, and unconsciously followed him into the room where poor Mary lay on a pallet. "It is the kind youth," she said, raising her faint eyes, and recognising Houghton, "who was so generous to me on the Down." The tears came to Houghton's eyes, and he at once opened the basket, and gently placed some grapes between the poor sufferer's lips. "Heaven bless you, good Sir," said the father, as he noticed some signs of improvement in his daughter's eyes; "she is already better." Mary, indeed, was better; the crisis had passed, and a favourable turn had come. "I will home," said Houghton, "and get a conveyance; this infected atmosphere is not fit for you or her, and my father's house in the country is open to an old friend and his child." "Who are you," asked Ashurst, "if not an angel come from Heaven to us in our distress?" "No angel, but a poor sinning mortal," modestly answered the young man; "and my name you shall know when I have conveyed you both to a more comfortable home;" and he hurried from the house, stating that ere three hours had elapsed, he would be with them again.

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About two years after the circumstances noticed above, and when Bristol and the kingdom generally had begun to recover from the wounds and bruises it had received in the sanguinary controversy between King and people, and the citizens had again recourse to their entertainments on the Marsh and the Butts, one summer's evening a group of Corn Street tradesmen were smoking their

pipes, looking at a game of bowls being played, when one of them asked if they had heard the news about Ashurst and Houghton? "What news?" cried the company. "Only that the old joke has come true. Will Houghton and John Ashurst's son and daughter were this morning married at Westbury Church, and the old folks, after fighting about King and Parliament, have become friends, and intend to go quietly down to the grave nursing their grandchildren."

"How is it?" asked several.

"Ashurst's daughter," said the gossip, "captivated Houghton's son while she was buying a goose from him——"

"And he sold himself to her also—that was a pair of geese," said a Corn Street tradesman, who was known to be addicted to bad puns.

The gossip had not got the story exactly, but it was not far off from the truth. Houghton received his old friend and his daughter with open arms, hospitably entertained them in his cottage at Shirehampton, and laughed heartily, when he "saw (to use his own words), in spite of the quarrels of a couple of old fools, a couple of young ones contrived to make each other happy."

Two years more after this, a small party might be seen sitting on the bar by "*Pitch and Pay*," on a fine Sunday afternoon. It consisted of two old men, a young man and young woman, with a baby, and the reader can have little trouble, I think, in recognising the group.

Lord Berkeley's Vow.

[Another and a different illustration of this curious incident in the annals of the Berkeley family has been written and printed by the writer. The reader of both can accept which ever suggested solution of the strange circumstances he pleases.]

1532, Jan. 22 —Thomas (5) Lord Berkeley died. He was at first buried in Mangotsfield Church, but removed, as he had requested, in eight months, and re-interred in the same tomb with his wife Eleanor, under the arch between the north aisle and the Elder Lady's Chapel, St. Augustine's, Bristol. This Thomas was the last of the family who was buried in the Monastery.—*Chronicles of Bristol.*

I do not expect a man and his wife never to fall out, never "to have words," as the phrase is; for this is supposing a state of human perfection not to be looked for, or a state of human indifference to which a connubial quarrel daily is preferable. But when they do fall out, I should advise neither of them to make hasty vows, which they will find it very inconvenient or very unpleasant to carry out, and which, when they become cool, they will contemplate with anything but satisfaction. The fate of Thomas Lord Berkeley should be a warning to us in this particular.

You may see his tomb, and read his epitaph on it, under one of the low-browed arches which separate the nave—or, as I suppose I must now call it, the choir—from the Early English Chapel on the north side of Bristol Cathedral. His ashes and those of his beloved Eleanor now repose together, but for eight months after his death they were separated and lay apart, and all because, in his hot anger when they had an altercation, he said hastily what he sore repented at his leisure.

The Berkeleys have been a bold turbulent lot from the beginning of their history—brave as it became old English barons to be—a quality they have not yet lost, and, I think and trust, they never will lose; but as I have intimated they never were persons from whom you would select presidents of the Peace Society; they had such a trick of quarrelling with their neighbours and amongst themselves. Witness "the Wigs" on Nibley Green, and many another green, where this same Thomas and others did their fair share of fighting. However, with all their faults, they were for the most part affectionate husbands. Overbearing to men, they had a kind way with their wives, and their wives, on this account, had their way very often with them. Thomas and Eleanor were no exception to the general rule; nevertheless, as it happens in the best-regulated families, they sometimes had words, and their great quarrel came about in this fashion.

Thomas Lord Berkeley succeeded in the title his brother, the sixth Maurice, who was governor of Calais, and died and was buried there. Both were the sons of the fifth Maurice, who had quarrelled with his elder brother William, as Berkeley brothers have since quarrelled, a lady nearly always being in the case. The elder William Viscount Berkeley, and created Marquis of that ilk, Earl of Nottingham and Earl Marshal of England, was as proud as Lucifer and imperious as the Grand Turk, and never forgave

his younger brother for having, as the term is, "married an inferior." Yet this inferior was no other than the daughter of a Bristol Alderman of old family, the Meads, of Mead-place, Failand in the parish of Wraxall near Portbury, Somerset, an ancient habitation, I believe, still standing, or at least that has stood within a few years. Mead's father or grandfather had been member of Parliament for more than one place, and possessed considerable estates in Gloucestershire, Bedminster, Ashton, Tickenham, &c. So that, on the whole, there was not such extraordinary disparity between the two that need have put the Earl Marshal in a towering passion with his poor brother, seeing that, besides all the substantial advantages to which I have referred, Isabel Mead was an uncommonly pretty woman—a young and interesting widow; and it has always been a weakness of the Berkeleys to be susceptible to the influence of a handsome face. Maurice, as he rode in and out of Bristol to look after the hundred marks per annum allowed his elder brother out of the customs of the port by Edward IV., saw Isabel at her father's window, and then made an excuse to see her in her father's house, and the termination of it was the usual ending of such interviews, the "old, old story," a marriage very quietly celebrated in St. Nicholas Church —for Maurice knew what a great Mogul and family Bashaw his elder brother was, and did not care to let him know of his nuptials, until he had contrived somehow or other to soften him beforehand.

But there are always plenty of people to carry news quickly when it is not desirable it should be known; and when Maurice, one fine morning, rode into the court-yard of Berkeley Castle, little dreaming of the reception awaiting him, his brother, the Earl Marshal, was there before him, and gave him a salutation anything but fraternal. You may depend upon it, the elder brother did not pick his words, unless it were to find some stronger than others—the very hardest in his profuse repertory. The Berkeleys, when in a passion, were never remarkable for their mild language; and to see that they have not altered in this respect, you have only to read Grantley's book, his "Life and Recollections," from which it would appear they never lost the trick of boxing and blowing up people.

If Lord William had stopped to think of the matter for a moment, he would have remembered that he himself owed the best part of his estate, and by no means the worst part of his blood, to a Bristol merchant, a man of business, Fitzhardinge: so that he need not have turned up his nose at trade. *But he did.* He called poor old Mead a Bristol huckster, a costermonger, a pedlar, and fair Isabel a pedlar's brat, and told Maurice he had disgraced himself and his family, and all by mixing his blood with the burgher churls — language, though in a modified form, which is still occasionally held by some folks, who like to think themselves "county people," to townsmen and men in trade who, in their own way, are as proud and ridiculous to one another.

The long and short of it was that Lord William then and there told Maurice that, if he could help it, the latter should have neither the Barony nor the broad lands of Berkeley—that he would disown, disinherit him; that there was, in fact, nothing he would not do to

him for the heinous offence of marrying a merchant's daughter. I expect William Earl Marshal had somewhat of the constitutionally choleric temper of William, late Earl Fitzhardinge, and that Maurice had to stand a fraternal lecture from the former very much after the fashion of those which Grantley had to hear from the latter when they fell out; though I hope Maurice had too much sense to retaliate upon his big brother by writing a book, and sending to the world four volumes of such wretched hodge-podge as "My Life and Recollections."

Earl William tried to deprive Maurice of the title, and gave all his lands away from him, so that Maurice would have been at once a beggar and a baron, if it had not been for Merchant Mead's money, and the broad acres it bought for him. Upon these Lord Maurice maintained himself in good state up to the time of his death, when he left the once fair Isabel for the second time a widow, but no longer, I suppose, so very attractive, being sixty-one when her second bereavement took place. She lived to be seventy, ending her days at Coventry, in the 8th year of Harry the Eighth's reign.

Maurice the 5th was succeeded by Maurice the 6th, his son; the latter being, I believe, the Berkeley who built the Newton Chapel, on the south side of Bristol Cathedral, and this sixth Maurice, as I said before, dying childless in Calais in 1523, Thomas, the husband of Eleanor, reigned over the tower and town of Berkeley in his stead; and after this long digression the main thread of my story of "Berkeley's Vow" begins.

Of course all these incidents of the quarrel between the two brothers William and Maurice being quite fresh in the recollection of the family, with the cause and consequences, were frequently the subject of domestic discussion. Thomas thought his uncle William wrong, and doubtless Thomas was right in so thinking, for many reasons, and this amongst the rest, that he was in the enjoyment of some considerable property purchased by the trade gains of Merchant Mead; and the rents when he received them, like Vespasian's penny, smelt nothing the worse on account of the source from which they were derived. The Lady Eleanor was in her heart of hearts probably of the same opinion; but with a woman's love of argument—I will not say contradiction—she not unfrequently took the opposite side. She may, too, have entertained a secret sense of superiority over the Bristol merchant's daughter, on account of her own higher birth and purer blood. She declared she could sympathise with Earl William on finding a mere burgher's daughter smuggled by a clandestine marriage into the family. There is a story told of a Bristol lady, the wife of a great West Indian proprietor, who, once desiring to establish balls of an exclusive character in Clifton, mentioned her intention to Sydney Smith, when Canon Residentiary of our Cathedral. "We want to have a local Almack's of our own," she said, "but of course with some difference you know, Mr. Smith." "I understand, ma'am," was the Churchman's reply, but, with a sly joke at the article in which her husband dealt, he added, "the difference between raw and refined sugar." I do not think that the art of converting the brown material into lump or crystals was known at

the early period of my story, which was possibly the reason why Lady Eleanor retorted upon her husband that it "was very hard upon a great Baron of Berkeley to see with complacency a hogshead of sugar rolled into his hereditary castle."

This speech of his wife's Lord Thomas declared was "rubbish, stuff, nonsense, and disgusting pride, which none but a fool and a shallow-pated woman could entertain." The blood of the Baroness was immediately up to boiling pitch. She hinted that her lord was unworthy of his lineage; that it was a pity he, like his father, had not looked for a bride amongst the hucksters of Bristol, and it was reserved for a Berkeley under the reign of Henry VIII. to defend a mésalliance by one of a family founded before the Tudors were known.

Lord Thomas blazed up at this persistent contradiction from his own wife. "Henry VII. or Henry VIII.," he exclaimed, scarlet with rage, "though I cannot endow you with common-sense, madam, I will teach you to use more becoming language to your liege lord and husband, and here declare that for eight months I shall not share your bed or society, so that in solitude and in forced celibacy you may have time and opportunity to reflect upon your folly, and to learn that conjugal obedience which a Berkeley, whatever his notions of lineage, has a right to expect from a woman who has the honour to be his wife."

He had hardly uttered this hasty vow when he regretted it: and Lady Eleanor, who never dreamt of a conjugal altercation coming to this extreme conclusion, turned pale with fright. With all her impetuosity, she wanted neither tenderness nor good sense, and her conscience told her at once that she was in the wrong—that she had allowed temper to carry her beyond the bounds of reason, and she burst into tears—the woman's true logic. "The quarrels of lovers," says the poet, "is the renewal of love," and the quarrels of husbands and wives often lead to the same conclusion. Lord Thomas would have given a good slice of his broad lands not to have made this rash vow; but he had made it with a solemn appeal to Heaven and the Virgin, and knew not how to break it without fearing the wrath of both: and the Berkeleys, with all their turbulence and violence, were religious or superstitious, as the world might please to designate the feeling in those or these days. He did not hesitate to say he was sorry and deeply grieved, but how was he to gainsay his rash speech? Lady Eleanor herself dared not ask him to do so, for she feared to urge him to forswear himself. One escape for the present, however, was open to them. He had vowed not to lie with her for eight months, but he had fortunately not said when that vow was to be carried into execution —when he was to keep it. They would leave it to time or accident, or it may be his father confessor, to suggest or furnish some road out of the difficulty.

A year passed, and the best part of another year, and, taught by a sad and sore experience, both scrupulously avoided any temptation to contradiction; and never did man and wife live more harmoniously together. But ever and anon came back to Lord Thomas his unfortunate and still unfulfilled vow, and with

continued postponement came the fear of punishment for leaving it unperformed, however bitter to both it must have been.

In the midst of these mental struggles death suddenly interposed. The Lady Eleanor was smitten with a fatal sickness, and, after a few days' suffering, expired. There was loud mourning in Berkeley tower and town for the decease of the kind and loving lady of the Castle. Lord Thomas was disconsolate, and refused to be comforted. For a longer time than usual he retained the remains of the beloved dead before he would consent to have them committed to the tomb. At length a funeral procession, such as had not been seen for generations, passed out under the great frowning portal of the Castle, taking the road to Bristol, and followed by friends, servants, and retainers, and also the bold yeomen of the Vale, by hundreds. After a journey of two days it entered Bristol, the burghers closing their shops, and showing every respect and regard towards a family long associated with their city. A body of the Black Canons of St. Augustine's met the hearse as it entered College green, and preceded it, chaunting the funeral service, to the old Monastery founded by Fitzhardinge. There, under an arch between the nave and the Elder Lady Chapel, were deposited the remains of Lady Eleanor, and there they still moulder.

The last to quit the spot was Lord Thomas, and with his deep sorrow was mingled the bitter, upbraiding recollection (and oh, how bitter are such recollections, when too late to be atoned for!) of that hasty quarrel and that hasty vow still unfulfilled, while he asked himself, with something amounting to agony, could the bereavement he had just suffered have been a punishment for evading his own rash though solemn asseveration.

Lord Thomas returned to Berkeley, an altered and a mournful man. After that the pleasures of the chase, so long his darling pursuit, had little charms for him, and rarely drew him forth from his gloomy seclusion. Only now and again he visited the old Monastery of Bristol, and when the shadows of evening were falling over it, and the monks had retired to their refectory, and aisle and nave and choir were silent, would he kneel by the side of the altar tomb, under the arch of the Lady Chapel, and pray for hours together.

At length Lord Thomas's own time came. Just as evening was darkening into night, and the hooting owl had commenced its rounds of old grey tower and turret and battlement, and the thick shadows hardly made the troops of deer in the park discernible, the priest of Berkeley was hastily summoned to the bedside of Lord Thomas. The noble Castellan was dying. He knew it himself, and could hardly be said to be sorry for it. Ever since he laid the loved remains of Lady Eleanor in the tomb by the north aisle of St. Augustine's Monastery, "life had ne tent o' joy for him," to use the words of Rowley; and now that he was about to go and meet her in another world, he had no regrets for the grandeur and greatness he was leaving. Only one anxiety pressed upon his mind: the vow unperformed, the hasty, foolish, but still solemn vow unfulfilled. He confided to the Father Confessor his secret, and the uneasiness he felt on that account, and visions of purgatorial pains in consequence of it rose up before him.

The priest of Berkeley was a thoughtful, acute man, and was in early life somewhat noted as a casuist. The vow was a hasty and sinful one, he said: still it was made under such solemn circumstances that he would not charge himself with the responsibility of declaring it might be overlooked; for had not the Psalmist said, "He that sweareth unto his neighbour, and disappointeth him not; though it were to his own hindrance, he shall dwell in the Lord's tabernacle, and rest upon his holy hill."

"But," groaned the dying Baron, "the season for fulfilling it has long passed. Hasty as I was death was still more so, and took away my Eleanor before I could pluck up heart to separate myself from her even for eight months."

"Retribue servo tuo," muttered the priest, and then was silent for a few moments, pondering something in his mind. "God is merciful, my son," he said, after awhile; "and has revealed to me, your confessor, how without pain or grief to yourself or sainted wife the hasty vow may still be performed, the obligation discharged."

"Then reveal it, reveal it, good Father," hurriedly exclaimed Lord Thomas, "and I will leave such a behest that the altars of Berkeley shall want neither waxlight nor incense to the end of time."

"You designed, Lord Thomas," continued the priest, not heeding these words, "to have your remains laid with those of Lady Eleanor in the monastery of the Blessed St. Augustine by Bristol, did you not?"

"Such was my cherished wish, and such it is still. Say nothing, good Father, to turn me from my purpose; separate us not," entreated Sir Thomas.

"Not for ever," said the priest. "But for eight months you may lie in another grave, and then be removed to the tomb of your wife, and thus you will have fulfilled your untoward vow and appeased the Virgin's anger."

A load was removed from Lord Thomas's breast. The priest had shown him a way short and easy out of his difficulties, and he was now prepared to die in peace, having given orders that after his decease they should inter him in Mangotsfield Church, and that at the expiration of eight months, his vow being fulfilled, he should be exhumed, and placed by the side of the Lady Eleanor within the altar tomb beneath the arch at the right side of St. Augustine's Abbey.

His instructions were carried out. A temporary grave was prepared in Mangotsfield Old Church, where the body lay until the 28th September, in the same year, when the coffin was taken up and conveyed with funeral pomp to Bristol, and there permanently deposited by the side of the Lady Eleanor.

And thus it was how the double obsequies of Thomas Lord Berkeley came about: the vow made in life was, in fact, fulfilled after death. He was the last of the family buried in the Monastery, which was suppressed by Henry VIII. a few years afterwards. From that September evening, in 1532, the Bristol tomb of the Berkeleys has never been opened to receive one of the race, who since then have, I believe, found a resting-place in the beautiful mortuary chapel of Berkeley Church.

The Queen and the Washerwomen.

A LEGEND OF BRANDON HILL.

Every one has heard the local tradition that liberty to dry clothes on the south-eastern slope of Brandon Hill, still enjoyed by the wives and daughters of Bristol freemen, was accorded to them by Queen Elizabeth, on the occasion of her visit to Bristol, as something to compensate them for their ugliness; as it was thought that, without a little freehold immunity of this kind, no one would take them in marriage. The tradition is a scandal and libel upon our ancestresses; and arose, as will be seen by the following, from the blundering attempt of the Mayor of the day, Sir John Young, to play the courtier.

A loud cheer and the firing off of thirty pieces of cannon announced to the thousands that thronged St. Augustine's Back, on a fine August morning in 1574, that the Virgin Queen, with her courtly train, was issuing from the great gateway of Sir John Young's house (afterwards Colston's Hospital, and now the site of Colston Hall), where she was lodged in fitting state. Hardly had the guns ceased, when all the bells of the neighbouring churches—and chiefest the ringing fraternity of St. Stephen's—struck out, while all the ships in the harbour displayed their bravest colours. On one side of the Queen rode the Mayor, on the other her favourite, Leicester; and to any one who saw the brilliant cavalcade approach the little arched wooden bridge which spanned the Frome nearly on the site of the present Drawbridge, nothing could possibly seem more splendid and gay. Yet Elizabeth was not in her sunniest humour that morning. Perhaps she had the vapours: perhaps she was wearied with too much sight-seeing, or perhaps her courtiers had not been fortunate in turning their compliments, or perhaps she was afflicted with any one of the thousand whims which visit lovely woman at least a dozen times a day, without all-enduring man being able even to guess at the cause. But surely her most gracious Majesty would presently brighten up; for she was on her way to the Marsh Quay, where there were erected a stage and a throne with canopy, for her to see the mimic naval engagement to be fought in the broad part of the river near Gib Taylor (now Prince's-street Bridge), where there was a fort to be stormed and dire deeds of sham battle to be done. But no; her Majesty, after she mounted the stage and took her seat, was not to be charmed out of her dumps; though the banks on all sides were crowded with thousands, who cheered and waved their beavers; and the bells of Old Redcliff, which overlooked the scene, sent out their pleasant chimes; and the ships of war presently came to the scratch, opening on one another with a roar and smell of sulphur that was astounding, bladders of blood being spilt on the decks, as an old chronicler of the spectacle tells us, to make matters look more fearful and sanguinary.

Still the Queen would hardly condescend to smile at the warlike

pastimes (which she might have done), even after the fort surrendered to cries of "God save the Queen," after three assaults. She at last turned to the Mayor, who was standing rather uncomfortably by her side—wondering what had occurred to cloud the bright occidental star—and said with some sharpness, "By the bones of my father, Master Mayor, but I protest I never saw so ugly a collection of women as your worshipful city can assemble on a gala occasion to give welcome to their Sovereign!"

Master Young was wide awake for once. "May it please your Majesty (was his answer), for the first time in my life the conviction has also been forced upon me this morning. Ignorance is bliss; we all thought our women fair enough and passable to look upon, until your Majesty, in your radiant beauty, condescended to shed the light of your noble countenance on this our city, and now we know for the first time what beauty is. Would that we had never had so transcendental an ensample shown us; for now that our eyes have been dazzled by it, we shall never again with satisfaction look upon the lowly features of our maids and matrons."

"Well turned, Master Mayor," said Elizabeth, not a little pleased with this shovel-full of a compliment, "thou hast moulded a very pretty speech; and shown thyself, at least this morning, a greater proficient at the courtly arts than my Lord of Leicester," and she gave my Lord of Leicester a look which endorsed her words.

"May it please your Majesty," answered the favourite, "who could better say sweet things than the worthy Master Mayor; since it is his occupation to sell sugar?"

"To a lump of which," retorted the Queen, "he will be happy to help my Lord of Leicester—a spoiled and sulky child."

"But a truce to this cross of words," she added, seeing Leicester inclined to retort, "I commend Master Mayor for his pretty speech; and only regret that his roads had not been better, so that my frills had been less tossed, and one would have been left for my tire-women to-day, in which it was fitting that a Queen should appear to advantage."

"Hallo," thought the Mayor, "lies the wind in that point; so all her ill-humour arose from her frills being tossed: all these black looks this morning have been caused by the crumpling of that quilled and plaited thing around her neck. Well, my name is not John Young if I do not give her Majesty cause to commend me in the matter of frills as well as speeches." So, speaking to himself, his Worship kept his own counsel for the present.

It was even so, however; as indeed her Majesty as good as confessed it. No one has ever yet seen a likeness of Queen Elizabeth without her frill; her Majesty is as inseparable from this piece of finery as Napoleon from his little cocked hat. Without her frill she would not be Elizabeth: she gloried in her frills; and if, when she found herself in public, she discovered that one of them was limp or out of plaiting, she was sure to lose her temper. She brought with her to Bristol a large stock, but on their being taken from the royal baggage that morning, it was discovered that they were all tossed and discomposed by the journey. And did

she not give it to her tire-women, when she learned that there was one hardly fit to wear! she was cross with her women, cross with her courtiers, cross with herself. The Mayor's compliment, it is true, brought back a smile, but it was a good deal that would make amends for the want of a properly starched and made-up frill.

While the royal cavalcade returned to the great house on St. Augustine's-back after the "warlike pastimes," the Mayor also turned his plans in his mind.

Next morning, accordingly, after her Majesty had breakfasted, and the magnates were crowding to pay court to her at the great house on the Back, a deputation of poor women were announced by the Chamberlain, "craving her Majesty's permission to make an offering to her most puissant liege."

Elizabeth was in little better humour than on the previous day, because her frill was in little better order than the one she wore at the sea-fight; so thinking this was some other show or pageant like that of yesterday, she answered testily, "I am weary of this tom-foolery; but let the jades approach!"

Accordingly, though not very courteously invited, they did advance into the royal presence, the two foremost bearing on a tray or stage a pile of—what do you think?—her Majesty's frills made up in superb condition by the washerwomen of Brandon Hill, which then being a suburb of Bristol, was celebrated as a colony of laundresses, who turned out, got up, their laces and "fine things" in splendid style, chiefly on account of their propinquity to the clear water of Jacob's Wells. Sir John Young, the Mayor, was, of course, in the secret: he got his wife on the previous evening to obtain from the Queen's waiting women some of her spoiled frills; had them distributed amongst the washerwomen of Brandon Hill and, apprising them of the importance of the duty devolving on them, left them to do their best. Hence the deputation. That they had succeeded could not be doubted by any one who saw the frills. At the sight her Majesty was almost moved to tears—she certainly was to grateful smiles.

The spokeswoman of the deputation was a patriarchess of the washing tub: her red arms and purple elbows showed this. "May it please your most gracious Majesty," she said, "we, your Majesty's most humble and dutiful laundresses, hearing that your High Mightiness was in some straight by reason of the injury that damp and travel had done your frills, have made bold to do up a few for immediate use, that we may at once show your Majesty our dutiful love to the throne and our skill as washerwomen."

"By the bones of my father, there is sense in this," cried Elizabeth, with manifest pleasure, at seeing her frills again fit to be worn: "I accept this loyal service, and should be happy to requite it (she added, looking towards the Mayor), if these good dames will say how I can serve them."

The Mayor communicated to the deputation of laundresses her Majesty's gracious intimation.

There was a pause and whispering amongst the dames of the soap suds; and then one advanced and said, "If it may please your gracious Majesty, and we do not seem too bold, we have been long

distressed for a drying-ground; the ranger of Clifton Wood forbidding us to hang our clothes on the trees of Brandon Hill, which he contends are part of the chase committed to his custody, though we verily believe his chase doth not extend below Jacob's Wells; still he worries our watchers with his dogs, and tears our clothes. So, then, if it would please your most puissant liege to order that we have indisputable license to use the south-west slope of Brandon Hill as a drying ground for all ages to come, we shall ever pray for health, happiness, and crisp frills for your Majesty."

Her Majesty intimated to the Mayor that, as their request was not an unreasonable one, he might have the pleasure of informing them it was granted.

Elated not a little with the success of his essay in courtier-craft, Sir John thought he would improve the occasion, and seize the opportunity for repeating the compliment which told so well yesterday, forgetting there is a time for everything. So he thus spoke out to the deputation of washerwomen:—"Her most gracious Majesty has permitted me to say that your request is complied with; she concedes the privilege in consideration of the good service you have rendered in the matter of the frills; and having, in her peerless beauty, pity on your ugliness."

A laugh, which the royal presence could not repress, broke from the assembled courtiers, and even Elizabeth could not help joining in. "By the bones of my father, Master Mayor," she said, "thou hast wickedly supplemented my words. It is not wise to shoot at the same butt twice, when the first arrow has hit the mark. Thy compliment was well done yesterday—it were better had it not been tried to-day."

The poor Mayor was crestfallen: he saw he had put his foot in it. Even Mayors are not at all times superior to vanity: and his success so far had turned his head, and made him fancy he was born for a courtier: so, in trying to excel, he over-did it. His wife saw this. "John," said she, "thou wilt never make a courtier!"

"And never again will try," cried the abashed Mayor; "I'll stick to sugar making."

But the mischief nevertheless was done: for with the privilege of clothes-drying on Brandon Hill was for ever associated the insult to our great grandmothers, and a laundress' right and a libel on our women have gone down together to posterity. That we enjoy the right, you need only look any morning on the south-west slope of St. Brandon's Hill, when you will see hanging out all manner of garments that male lips dare not name—that, however, the maids and matrons of Bristol, if they ever deserved, have long outlived all cause for the ugly imputation, I have but to point to—

My better-half, who is overlooking me as I write, adds, "Can't you say—*my own wife*——"

And so let it be—my own wife—as no bad example; but won't she, like Katherine, "comb my noddle with a three-legged stool," when she comes to read it in print.

Fine Feathers.

A MORAL ON MILLINERS' BILLS.

1490.—"The King and the Lord Chancellor came to Bristol and lodged at St. Augustine's, and the commons were made to pay twenty shillings for every one that was worth twenty pounds, because their wives went so sumptuously apparelled. The town gave the King five hundred pounds as a benevolence.—*Local Records.*

"A benevolence!" Silky, soft words some of our old sovereigns found for hard things, at least things that were by no means pleasant. Few monarchs were fonder of money than Henry the Seventh. He had a miser's love of it, and liked to feel and finger it, and see it growing in his coffers; and when he wanted "to make up a little amount" (as a modern tradesman would say when sending you in his bill, and wishing to excuse the rather pressing note which accompanies it) his Majesty would make a trip into the provinces, star it in a grand tour like a theatrical planet, and raise a "benevolence" more or less in amount according as he saw the evidences of wealth in the people or the place he visited. For he was not a stupid tyrant, perhaps not a tyrant at all, as we sometimes understand tyrants. He did not want to impoverish his people, for he felt they were *his people;* but when he satisfied himself they could bear some "bleeding," afford a little "fleecing," he fleeced them, only he used his royal shears according to the amount of wool on their backs. He did not clip when the coat was already very close.

This shears he called his "benevolence"—a grim joke, but not intended to be one, and certainly not relished as one by those who suffered. The term was designed to let folks fancy they were making him a present—giving of their own freewill to the sovereign that which, however, it would be very unsafe to refuse. It is only a wonder the highwaymen did not adopt the ingenious epithet. It would be a good name for a subscription to a piece of plate, which you could not well withhold without making a man your enemy, all the more unpleasant if he happens to be powerful. I once was rash enough to do this, and never regretted it but once, and that was ever after.

In the case of Henry VII. and the old Bristol burghers, it was a game of "diamond cut diamond," but the Bristol diamond had the worst of it. The old cunning fox of a king was too much for my ancestors, in spite of their ever-wakeful one eye that strangers seldom could throw dust in. The citizens knew the Monarch's weakness for *benevolence*, and knew also that he "stuck it on strong," in proportion to the appearance of wealth which the place presented; so they determined to be beforehand with him, and meet him with as poor a mouth as possible. They prepared an address—which address is still extant in the local records—

depicting the decadence of their trade, and contrasting their present fallen state with the commerce and "ships manifold" which they once possessed. They resolved to treat his Majesty with a street pageant, and part of the performance was to be the presentation of a memorial, to be read to him by some greybeards, as the procession passed by St. John's Gateway.

But, as the poet sings,

> The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
> Gang aft a-gley;

and the ladies of Bristol literally check-*mated* their husbands. While the latter resolved to put on their saddest looks the former determined to put on their best clothes, and we know when the fair ones determine upon anything, they *do* it, if they can. At least, good reader, that is your and my experience of the softer sex. It was bad enough to have the Christmas bills to pay for these rich dresses and bright brocades; but to have the rich dresses and bright brocades quoted in answer to one's plea of poverty was worse. The matter struck shrewd Jasper Chapman in this light the very morning the King was expected, and he saw his wife and daughters as fine as pea-hens, preparing to astonish his Majesty and train with their costly apparel: but when he ventured to remonstrate, they met him with the adage, "A cat may look at the king," *ergo*, they might and would. "Did he think, then, they were going to sit in their smickets as King Henry passed their casements?" Jasper was too wise a man to argue against such odds; so he only shook his head in mournful and mute protest.

Henry VII. had as critical an eye for a gown as a gold piece, and he chuckled as he rode by and looked up at the windows, rubbing his royal palms to think what jolly subjects for a benevolence! We talk of petticoat government, but the government in those days saw something even in a petticoat to invite a tax, and the King fixed the amount in his mind as he rode through Wine Street. The memorial was presented to him, according to programme, as he approached John's-gate; the way to the Monastery (where he was to lodge) being under that ancient city portal, through Knifesmith (now Christmas) Street, Frome-gate, and Host or Horse Street. When they talked about their poverty, it is needless to say his Majesty did not believe a word of it after what he saw.

Next day the chief burgesses proceeded to the Abbey of St. Augustine's, on a hint from the King. He wanted to see them, but great an honour as such interview was, they would have preferred staying at home. They fancied the desired morning call on his Majesty would be for no good—be unattended with profit to them; and their fears and fancies were well founded.

When ushered into the august presence, they were politely informed their sovereign was short of cash, as many sovereigns and subjects have been, and are again likely to be. His Majesty would not have to ask for it a second time, they said, if they were not so poor; but trade was bad, money scarce, and credit no better.

"This won't do, gentlemen," intimated the King, not precisely in these words but words to this effect, "Surely you can see nothing green in me; but if you do, I am not quite so verdant as to imagine

those dames and damsels I saw yesterday glittering like birds of paradise were paupers' wives."

Jasper Chapman, who was the chief spokesman, thought it advisable to give in. If they did not, he suspected, the amount of the benevolence might be raised; so he bowed low, and embraced the opportunity to groan in spirit when he thought what their wives and daughters' love of finery had brought upon them besides milliners' bills. "Your Majesty's request shall be complied with," he said, "even out of our poverty," and he hinted a wish to know how much was expected. "Five hundred pounds down," said the King, "but if I have to book it, it will be more." He had no need to book it, for the money was paid within an hour. The only return the burgesses had for their "benevolence," which in this case they considered anything but "seasonable," was to be able to blame their wives, which, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, they were on the present occasion allowed to do.

The income tax is the modern invention nearest of all to the old "benevolence." A short time ago, a professional man, in a city certainly not a hundred miles off, wrote and returned on his paper when sent in these words, "Has no income, and never expects to have any." Unfortunately two of the commissioners had passed his wife the day before, and noted how superbly she was dressed; they therefore concluded such fine feathers must come out of income or capital, and assessed him in accordance with their ideas as family men upon such subjects. He appealed, and when he came before them, they simply asked him how his wife came to do this out of nothing: he was not prepared at the moment with a satisfactory reply, and in default had to pay.

The moral of this is that if a man must put on a poor mouth, his wife must not put on a rich garment.

The Governor's Gratitude.

ANOTHER LEGEND OF BRANDON HILL.

1066.—Brictric, at this time governor of the Castle of Bristol, and who held the manor of Thornbury (containing Oldbury-upon-Severn, Cowhill, Kingston, Marlewood, Morton, Hope, Buckover, and Padfield), had been employed in an embassy to Baldwin, Earl of Flanders, when Matilda, or Maud, the Earl's daughter, settled her affections on him, but was rejected. Being now the wife of the Conqueror, with "a woman's hatred and a woman's vengeance," she excited her husband against him, as a Saxon of power and large possessions, and Brictric was arrested and sent a prisoner to Winchester, where he died soon afterward.—*Evans's Outlines of Bristol History.*

[The writer of the following, finding there is at present a growing taste for historical romances, flatters himself he has nicely preserved, in this thrilling tale, the archæological and antiquarian features of the eleventh century. There are some incidental allusions in it that may startle shallow antiquarians, and induce them to charge the writer with anachronisms; but he gives full notice to all such pretenders that he will not recognise any modern authority, opposed to his own, later than Giraldus Cambrensis or the Domesday Book.]

"One kiss more at parting," said a manly voice, and presently an unmistakeably audible smack was heard, and the historian is of opinion that the gallant petitioner was not content with "one more;" for the sound was repeated. It might have been echo, or it might have been the noise of the warder's halbert knocking against the lanthorn which he held; for this little incident occurred on the drawbridge of Bristol Castle, the night before Governor Brictric Snaw started upon his Flemish embassy. The lady was Miss Sybil Svein, daughter of Mr. Ethelmund Svein, a highly respectable citizen of Bristol, who thought himself, and with good reason, rather a lucky man, in being about to become the father-in-law of one so well to do in the world as the young Governor of Bristol Castle, and the owner of so many manors.

The father and the daughter had been spending the evening with the betrothed of the latter in his feudal hall, and this kiss on the drawbridge, as the warder lighted them over the moat, was only a continuation of several similar leave-takings that already occurred within the baronial hall during the evening, somewhat to the embarrassment of Mr. Ethelmund Svein, who, under the circumstances, could hardly refuse his intended son-in-law this little gratification, yet felt he was somewhat in the way, and would not well have known where to look every time Brictric asked for another pledge of love, only that the governor had a good tap and rather a decent Double Gloucester from his manor of Oldbury. The number of vows, which Brictric swore to Miss Sybil, are not recorded; but, in answer to a little song, which she sung to the following effect:—

With your gun upon your shoulder,
And your sword upon your side,
You'll be courting some fine lady,
And be making her your bride—

he protested most cordially that, if he were offered a lady in Flanders, with her own weight in gold (a good dower considering the Flemish ladies are generally fat), he would not forget his "little Sybil" for her. But Sybil with a tear in her eye, only sang the remainder of the song—

Can you look me in the face
And say the same, Jeanot?

By the way, anxious as I am to be considered a strict archæologist and antiquarian, I may here observe that there is an impression that this is a modern song; but, if my critics will only kindly refer to Domesday Book, and can *find it there*, they will concur with me in claiming for the touching ballad an extraordinary antiquity.

Ethelmund Svein had a few words with his daughter as they walked together through Defence Lane, Wine Street, and Corn Street, to their residence in Small Street, to which the present Quay then served for a garden, watered by the Frome, then a capital trout stream. Having called to his servant girl, who carried the lanthorn before them (the Health of Towns' Acts not being in force), to walk a little further in advance, so that she should be out of hearing and not annoy them with the clatter of her pattens, "Sybil," said he, "the Governor has a good tap, and his cheese is very fair; but between you and me, I think he kisses and vows too much to be depended on; so I should not wonder if he came back with a Flemish wife. I don't want to hurt your feelings, my dear, but it is just as well to be prepared for the worst. I hope you have kept his letters, for he is worth powder and shot,* and I think we'd get stunning damages in an action for Breach of Promise."

This speech of the old gentleman's was equally unworthy and unwise, for he might have guessed, after a moment's thought, that Sybil could have no love letters of Brictric's, for the best of reasons, that the Governor, like the "best of quality" in those days, could not write.

Sybil stoutly, like a true girl, told her father that if she had any of her lover's letters she'd make curl papers of them before she lent them for such an ignoble purpose, and further added, that unless papa desired to make himself particularly disagreeable and wanted her to faint in the streets and spoil her best Spitalsfield silk, he had better drop the unpleasant topic. The old gentleman shut up.

Chapter II.

Reader, have you ever been in Bruges, once the Flemish capital of Count Baldwyn? At present it is the best place to sleep in that I know. The drowsy *carillons* chime all day: there is nobody in the streets. The houses mope over the canals, and there is nothing to disturb the canals but a duck or two. At the time of my story it was a different place: it was full of inhabitants and fashionables, who ate and drank like fighting cocks, and rode and junketted,

* If any one says powder was not invented at this time, all I can say is that he might as well assert actions for Breach of Promise were not known in the eleventh century.

and indulged in Mag's diversions day and night. Master Brictric was very soon in the middle of the fun, flirting away with Baldwyn's black-eyed daughter in a manner that made everybody jealous, especially William, afterwards, not then, the *Conqueror;* for in a quarrel which he had with the young Bristolman the latter gave him a taste of his prowess that made William, at least in this instance, the conquered, instead of the *conqueror.* Poor Sybil! it was well she did not know how matters were going on in Flanders. She wrote long letters to her lover, who only half spelt through them at first, and then had as many as a dozen in arrear. The poor young man, indeed, was puzzled, as young men sometimes are who, having got engaged to a pretty girl without any money, afterwards see an opportunity of marrying one with a good sum in possession and expectations unbounded. Still, I must say for Brictric that he did not wholly forget his home love; for had he wholly forgotten her, he would have at once proposed for Maud. Maud, however, daily expected to hear him make the interesting revelation, and wondered why he delayed. "That's a handsome young fellow," said she one day to her maid, "but he is uncommonly slow in coming to the point." The waiting maid knew little of British customs, and had been made the subject of more than one hoax by Brictric's Bristol valet, who, amongst other things, told her that in England the ladies proposed for the gentlemen, and not the gentlemen for the ladies. She communicated this "curious custom" to her young mistress, who at once determined to profit by the knowledge, so she despatched a note presenting her compliments to Mr. Snaw, and requesting that he would do her the honour to look in as he passed. She was a bold off-hand girl, and knew the best way to do a bold thing was to do it boldly. To use a classic phrase, as old as the days of Europa, "She took the bull by the horns."

"Young gentleman," said she, archly, when he made his appearance, "I beg your pardon for keeping you so long waiting, for I only just learned that you English gallants are so modest, the ladies, if they mean to have you at all, must pop the question to you, instead of your performing that interesting ceremony towards them. Now, to make a long story short, when will it be convenient for you to get married? You know I'm what the world calls a good match. Settlements and all that you need not trouble about—the lawyers will manage them—only name your day, say the word, and no more nonsense."

Brictric Snaw, to use plain terms, was knocked all in a heap. His last kiss and last word to Sybil on the drawbridge of Bristol Castle tingled upon his lips. "I am in a fix," thought he; "I have gone too far, and if I seem reluctant to go farther, she will have me chucked into one of those muddy canals, and poor Sybil will never see her Brictric Snaw again." He did not know what to say, and so he said nothing. Maud could not guess what to make of his silence, but seeing him put his hand to his jaw in his perplexity, she asked him if he had the tooth-ache. He replied "No; but the heart-ache," and taking this as a compliment to her own powers of fascination, she was content for the present,

and told him her papa would be glad to see him that night, to share in a barrel of Ostend oysters and a bottle of Guinness's XXX. Brictric, glad to escape, placed his hand to his bosom and made a low bow, but as he was going out at the door, Maud called after him with a roguish sparkle in her eye, "Old fellow, you have forgotten something."

Brictric turned back for his gingham umbrella. "Pooh," says Maud; "it was not that I meant," pouting out a pair of lips that would have tempted Cardinal Newman or Saint Anthony. "'Pon my word," stammered Brictric; "I did not understand you," taking a kiss very awkwardly. "You take it," cried Maud, quite pettishly, "as if it were physic; but don't forget the oysters at nine, sharp."

Brictric, when he returned to his lodgings, told his valet to pack up his things as quickly as possible, as he must be off that night. "I hope they have not put you, Governor, into the County Court," said the man; "that you leave in such a hurry." "It has more to do with the Count's daughter than the County Court," answered his master; "but, look sharp; I hope the washerwoman has sent home all my shirts."

The fifth morning after this incident, Brictric, the Governor of Bristol, landed at Rownham Ferry and, hailing one of Follwell's flys, surprised them all at the Castle by rattling up to the drawbridge. "The pass word?" called out the warder from the nearest tower. "Don't you wish you may get it?" said the Governor's valet, who sat on the box, having on his lap his master's helmet battle-axe and two-handed sword, and, so saying, he put the flat of his thumb to the tip of his nose, and extended his little finger in a derisive manner towards the vigilant officer.

The warder (the same whose likeness you see in the Bristol arms, up to his middle in a tower, and blowing a trumpet), called out to the guards to pull up the drawbridge and let the portcullis fall, when Brictric put his head out of the fly, and told him not to make an ass of himself.

"I'm shot," said the man, as soon as he saw the Governor's face, and overjoyed at the sight, "if here is not master back again."

It is useless to describe in detail the rejoicings which greeted the Governor's return. The prepositor, or Mayor, and Corporation, bundled off to the Castle as soon as possible, presented him with an address, and remained for luncheon. They also proposed illuminations, but this Brictric very considerately declined owing to the high price of tallow; still, they had a very pleasant jollification at the Nag's Head, in Wine Street, and, if you can find a *Farley's Journal* of that date, you may read the speeches made on the occasion.

But, love, all conquering love! Where was Sybil Svein all this time? You may depend upon it she was within the Castle precincts. "I hope you have not been flirting with any of the Flemish girls, Brictric," said she, after the three hundred and sixty-fifth kiss of welcome. "Not a bit of it," said Brictric, the fibster.

Chapter III.

Gracious me, what an uproar the bells are making! And St. Peter's, which is the chapel of ease to the Castle, is ringing like mad, though St. Leonard's, which no longer stands, is making strenuous efforts to produce as much noise. What is it all about? What could it be all about but a wedding? Brictric Snaw and Sybil Svein were married this very morning; the happy couple, and a large circle of friends, sitting down to a splendid *déjeuner* prepared in Warren's best style.

While the Dean, however, is proposing the bride's health, let us just slip back for a moment to Bruges, and see how Baldwin's lovely daughter is bearing the shameful insult offered to her by the fair-haired Bristolian. A woman in a passion is no joke, and Maud was in a towering one. She tore a shot silk, a mousseline-de-laine, and a tarlatan dress, in her first transport of grief, and was preparing to lay violent hands on a new crinoline petticoat, when her old rejected suitor, William of Normandy, looked in. Seeing her in such tantrums he coolly repeated the proverb, "Anger is an enemy to beauty," and added, "Since Mr. Snaw would not take you, perhaps you might do worse than take me." "It is a bargain," said Maud, "on one condition: that you take England, and hand this Bristol fellow over to me to be flayed alive for his insolence." "Settled," says William of Normandy, "and here is my hand to the contract."

Chapter IV.

A few years after this, if you looked into Bristol Castle you would have seen Brictric's eldest son, "the very image of his father," trundling a hoop in the outer court yard, and the baby in a perambulator pushed along by one of the warriors in chain armour. Their papa and mama were looking out of a port hole in the donjon keep on the little darlings, when a messenger made his appearance to say that a lady staying at the White Lion wished to see the Governor. Sybil's ears pricked up, and Brictric's face fell. The former would have forbidden her husband to attend to so equivocal an invitation, but he took up his helmet hastily and, saying he would be back in a few minutes, proceeded to the ancient hostelry in Broad Street. He was shown up into the Apollo.*

"Do you remember me?" asked a lady, rising as he entered. "Oh, don't I?" thought Brictric, while he added aloud, "The Lady Maud."

"Not the Lady Maud, but the Queen Maud. The Queen of England and wife of William the Conqueror," retorted Maud, her eye flashing fire. Brictric got on his knee to make his obeisance, and muttered something about "Mrs. Snaw being glad to see her Majesty to tea at the Castle."

"Ingrate," cried Maud, "I am come not for Congou but

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* By the few surviving frequenters of the old White Lion, this capital and comfortable convivial chamber where private dinner parties were accommodated, will be remembered with something between a smile and a sigh.

vengeance—vengeance a thousand times sweeter than flowery Pekoe itself sweetened with Finzel's patent crystals. You jilted me. This hand, which holds a sceptre, I offered you."

"I thought you were joking," interposed Brictric. "I'll make it a bitter joke to you," she retorted, and stamping on the floor, a band of halberdiers entered. "Take this fellow off to Winchester Castle," she said, and glancing at him she added, "I'll teach you not to refuse a good offer."

"Will you not allow me," he asked, "to go back and take leave of my wife?"

"No."

"Or pack up a few shirts?"

"No."

Just at that moment the laundress of the Lion, who overheard his request and refusal, rushed in and placed a half-dozen clean shirts in his hand. "Let it never be said," she exclaimed, "that the Governor of Bristol wanted a change of linen when a Bristol washerwoman could serve him."

A tear of gratitude glistened in Brictric's eye "I shall never forget," he exclaimed, "this noble conduct of a Bristol washerwoman in the moment of my distress." "But," he added, turning up the corner of one of the shirts, on which the name of 'John Brown' was worked, "am I not making free with another gentleman's linen?"

"Only a commercial traveller's," said the laundress, "I'll replace them."

Chapter V.

Brictric had been sometime a prisoner in Winchester fortress, when the key turned in the lock of his door, and who should enter but William the Conqueror.

"Hallo, Snaw," said he.

"Hallo, your Majesty" answered Snaw.

"You have got into an ugly scrape with my wife, but I wish with all my heart you had married her."

"Indeed," says Snaw, "that's odd."

"Not a bit of it," replied the King; "for if you had married her I couldn't; and a pretty life she leads me. They call me William the Conqueror abroad, but I am William the Conquered at home. However, that's not my business here. The Queen has a strange fancy for having your head cut off, and it is her present intention to carry her laudable purpose into execution on an early day. Now, I don't like this. It is not fair, and the newspapers will be making an awful fuss about it, so I have just looked down to tell you to be off; you will find the door open, so bolt. We'll bury a coffin full of stones, and tell my wife you died in captivity, leaving her a lock of your hair, so that she will be saved the trouble of cutting that off and your head too."

"That's very handsome of you," answered the poor Governor; "and I'll make no bones about bolting."

"Mum's the word," said the King; "for I don't want Maud to hear of it, as the grey mare is the better horse at home. Go back

to Bristol: keep quiet for a time, bide a little, and better days will come."

And better days did come. History lies when it says Brictric died in prison. History very often lies, as Niebuhr will tell you. It was Maud who died, and not Brictric, and when the latter recovered his own, his first public act was one of gratitude. He remembered the kindness of the laundress of the Lion, when he wanted a clean shirt. He would have made her lady, but she would not have it: she was a sticker-up for her order, and would not desert the sisterhood of the soap-suds; she knew the inconvenience they sustained for the want of a drying-ground, so she said the only favour she would ask would be permission for Bristol washer-women, in all future ages, to dry their clothes unmolested on Brandon Hill. "It is granted," exclaimed Brictric Snaw. And so it was.

I know there is an impression that Queen Elizabeth was the donor of this privilege; but until it can be proved that the Virgin Queen did grant such a right, I contend that Brictric Snaw is entitled to the honour and gratitude of posterity for the privilege, and if you desire to have my assertion confirmed, you have but to go to Brandon Hill and see for yourselves. The shirts are hanging there at this moment.

[In printing the foregoing grotesque composition, we beg to say that the same incident in Bristol History, namely, the persecution of Brictric by Maud for having rejected her advances, was (some dozen years ago) turned into a more *serious* tale under the title of "Brictric Snow: or a Woman's Revenge." The curious romance is also related by Agnes Strickland, in her "Queens of England," just as it occurs in the Bristol Outlines, given above, with this addition, that William of Normandy, who was, before Brictric's embassy, an ineffectual suitor for Maud, finding that he was, after Brictric's departure, still refused any countenance by the beautiful Fleming, entered Bruges one day, and meeting Maud going to church, rolled her in the mud of the streets (with her father's connivance, it is presumed), and threatened to serve her in the same manner every Sunday, unless she accepted him. This rough wooing, in the way "the lion wooes his bride," so frightened Maud that she accepted him. William, finding he could conquer a woman, was emboldened next to undertake the conquest of England.—EDITOR.]

The Earliest Water-Cure Establishment.

1552.—A post was set up in the water of the Frome, at the mouth of the ditch, under the awful frown of the Castle walls. Across this post was placed a transverse beam, turning on a swivel, with a chair at one end of it; in which, when the culprit was properly placed, that end was turned to the stream and let down into it, once, twice, or thrice, according to the tender mercy, gallantry, or auricular sensibility of the operators.

1718.—Edmund Mountjoy, Mayor.—In this Mayoralty, the Ducking Stool on the Weir was used as a cure for scolding in one particularly inveterate instance; but the husband of the lady, whose "evil spirit" was so "laid," when the year of civic supremacy expired, brought his action of battery in behalf of his peaceful rib, before Sir Peter King, at the Guildhall, "and the man (says our authority) recovered such damages that the ex-Mayor could not endure the mention of *cold duck* any more."—*Evans's History of Bristol.*

Bristol had a hydropathic institution in 1718. Nay, even as far back as 1552 mention is made of one; though a circumstance which occurred in the first-named year made the fact particularly notable, and fixed it in folks' memories. It was neither picturesquely nor pleasantly situated, and those who form their idea of it from the great establishments of Malvern and Graffenberg will be very much mistaken. It stood by no glassy stream or rippling rill. Under the shadow of the old Castle walls, at the mouth of the Castle ditch, where it is fed by the dull waters of the Frome, it was erected, and it went by no more romantic name than "the Ducking Stool." It was a simple contrivance—a post, on which was placed a transverse beam, turning on a swivel, with a chair on one end of it. In this chair, the patient, whom they called a culprit, was placed, and then it was turned over the water and let down into it, once, twice, or thrice, according to the nature of the case and the taste or mercy of the operator. The party under treatment was always a woman of voluble talents, for whom the magistrates had the harsh name of "scold;" and the sousing system was held to be so effectual a remedy for female rhetoric, that there is a record that the people of Edgeware, in Middlesex, were presented in the middle of the sixteenth century for being without the requisite stool: the stocks not being considered a more usual penal appurtenance of a place than the post and transverse beam with the chair on the end of it.

One feels, however, it was very unfair to apply it exclusively to the female gender. If it was a cure for too glib a tongue, why was it not used against excessive talkers of either sex, whose tongues ran too fast? I will not say that even public speakers would not be the better of occasional immersion: we should then have more condensation and brevity in addresses delivered at open meetings.

I need hardly add that, amidst its numerous philanthropic, charitable, and sanitary institutions, Bristol no longer possesses a

Ducking Stool. The Castle ditch may still be easily defined, but the post, the beam, the chair have disappeared. At what time it ceased to be numbered amongst the curative establishments, I cannot precisely say; but it is conjectured that it fell into disuse in the year 1718, when Edmund Mountjoy was Mayor, and his Worship got into a scrape by too vigorous a use of the transverse plank and appurtenances. In Mountjoy's Chief Magistracy (says the local annalist), "the *Ducking*-stool on the Weir was used as a cure for scolding in one particularly inveterate instance; but the husband of the lady, whose 'evil spirit' was so 'laid,' when the year of civic supremacy was expired, brought his action of battery in behalf of his peaceful rib before Sir Peter King, at the Guildhall, and the man recovered such damages that the ex-Mayor could not endure the mention of *cold duck* any more."

I should think not. When the Irish Judge Norbury told a tailor, who fell into the canal, that "better he had a *hot goose* at home than a *cold duck* there," the subject of the joke did not enjoy it, any more than the unlucky Mayor is said to have done. There is no mention here made of the name of the last lady under treatment, but I fancy I have seen it stated that tradition said it was a Mrs. Blake, who must have been a person of surpassing fluency, possessing a tongue with a "bitter end" to it, as the Yankees would say. Doubtless her husband had the full benefit of the organ, which a modern writer has called "Woman's Minié Rifle," "the noisy occupant of a small tenement—the latch-key that lets out the mind." And certainly it does not want for similes, epithets, and comparisons; hundreds, from the wise man Solomon to the last-born moralist, having had something to say on the subject.

The curious part of this business of Mayor Mountjoy's is that his Worship was rumoured to be himself subjected to some such domestic infliction as Mistress Blake's husband had to complain of, though, of course, in a milder and more polished form. When he was elected to the civic dignity, the local jokers said, "the grey mare (Mayor) would be found the best horse;" for while he ruled all the city besides, Mistress Mountjoy ruled him. She certainly was not Tennyson's paragon—

> "The queen of marriage—a most perfect wife,"

if perfection consisted in concealing her dominion over her worthy husband. Nor did she realise the poet's description of her

> "who ne'er answers till a husband cools,
> Or, if she rules him, never shows she rules,
> Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
> Yet has her humour most when she obeys."

On the contrary, Mrs. Monntjoy was demonstrative in her authority. Possibly, if any of her friends said her husband "could not call his soul his own," she would have resented the speech; and upon one occasion, when a fair neighbour of hers jocosely hinted at her wearing certain inexpressible garments, she was very angry at the bare mention of such unfeminine attire. Nevertheless, no one could be half-an-hour in the company of the estimable couple without seeing Mrs. M. make her "lesser half" look still less a dozen times in the eyes of his acquaintance. Mistress Mountjoy did not

see that all this was very impolitic, both as it affected the sex in general and her own daughters in particular. For she had three rather fine girls, and if they were remaining on hand longer than, considering their personal and pecuniary attractions, might be expected, it was thought to be attributable to the apprehension, on the part of young men, lest they might inherit some of mama's disposition for domestic empire. Any graceless bachelor, in fact, who desired to reflect on the divine institution of marriage, not unfrequently pointed his moral by referring to "Poor Mountjoy," and asking if any man in his senses would voluntarily turn his home into a "House of Bondage," more grievous to be borne than even an Egyptian one, by taking unto himself a female despot like Mrs. M. The author of the "Anatomy of Melancholy," who was a bachelor, says, "The worldly cares, miseries, discontents, that accompany marriage, I pray you learn of them that have experience, for *I have none.*" Nevertheless, after this admission of ignorance natural in a single man, he proceeds to denounce the state as though he had all the knowledge of it to be earned in triple wedlock. "An Irish sea (he says) is not so turbulent and raging as a litigious wife, which made the devil, belike as most interpreters hold, when he had taken away Job's goods, *corporis et fortunæ bonæ*—health, children, friends—to persecute him the more, leave him his wicked wife, as Pineda proves out of Tertullian, Cyprian, Austin, Chrysostom, Prosper, Gaudentius, &c.; to vex him and gaule him worse than all the fiends." Still, harping on the same subject, he goes on, with a grim jocosity, to refer to the case of "that Syracusian in a tempest, who, when all ponderous things were to be exonerated out of the ship, *quia maximum pondus erat*, flung his wife into the sea. But this I confess (he adds, thinking possibly that, like a vile, malicious, old bachelor as he was, he had gone too far), is commically spoken, and so, I pray you, take it." He will not accept the responsibility of advising us to throw our wives overboard. But with better right to speak on the subject than old *Democritus Secundus*, I will say married ladies who openly assert dominion over their husbands prejudice the interests of their unwedded sisters by giving sceptics as to the bliss of domestic union a peg on which to hang their malevolent diatribes. And this I say for the benefit of all whom it may concern.

But to return to the subject—to ask permission to sit again on the Ducking Stool. This (it is supposed) was the way in which it came to pass, that Mr. Mayor Mountjoy got into a scrape in the matter of Mistress Blake :—

On the morning in question his Worship ventured to hint, in answer to the Mayoress's expressed determination to give evening parties during their year of office, in preference to those "selfish gluttonous affairs, gentlemen's dinners," that the majority of the magistrates and corporation were old men, more or less tried by the gout, who could not dance, and would vote him a mean fellow unless he found them handsomely in turtle as hitherto.

"And who cares what the old barbarians vote *you*, Mr. Mountjoy?" demanded his fair partner. "Am I *not* (and she laid particular stress upon the word) mistress in my own house, and will they—

will any one—presume to dictate to *me* what I am to do, and whom I am to have in my own house?"

Mrs. Mountjoy paused for an answer, as the newspaper says, but received none. His Worship knew better than to claim the right of reply. As poor Admiral Fitzroy would say, he saw the storm signal—the inverted cones up; so he walked quickly into the hall, took his cane and hat, and went into town by the way of the Hotwells; sighing, as people took off their hats to him and gave him the whole flag-way, when he reflected that with all this outward show of honour and dignity, he had about as much deference paid him in his own house as the, as the——but I won't finish the sentence, for comparisons are proverbially "odorous."

In this humour he was "walking slowly and sadly revolving" (like the old priest of Apollo in Homer), by a costermonger's shop when sharp and shrill accents struck upon his ear, almost piercing the tympan with their acute sounds. "You good-for-nothing, faint-hearted wretch," shouted the fair speaker, as she pushed her meek-looking husband into the street, "go cool your legs in the air until you learn to return more quickly when I send you on an errand." More, much more, she uttered, but I cannot shock ears polite by repeating it.

Mr. Mayor Mountjoy paused: a "fellow feeling" had made him "wondrous kind" to the unhappy costermonger, and here was an opportunity of punishing in another's his own wife's weakness (or strength, just as you may please to call it). It even flattered his imagination to think that he could vicariously teach his wife a lesson.

"Officer," said he, calling to one who happened to be passing at the moment, and who came at once to his Worship's signal, "officer, have that demi-rep before me at the Tolzey within the next hour. I will teach her that a man is, or ought to be, master in his own house."

The officer was a bit of a wag, and, as he knew a thing or two and heard it hinted more than once, that his Worship did not rule the roost at home, he had some difficulty in preserving that gravity which was quite consistent with the deference due to the chief magistrate of Bristol. Nevertheless, he acted upon the orders he received, and Mrs. Blake duly appeared at the Tolzey in the course of the day, when she fully maintained her reputation for eloquence and candour by giving his Worship "a bit of her mind." "A pretty sort of gentleman he," she openly declared, "to talk of a man being master in his own house, when he dared not even sneeze inside his own hall door without asking permission of his wife."

"Order! Silence, silence, woman!" cried the Mayor's sergeant, so lustily that it was believed he did so to prevent his Worship seeing him laugh. His Worship was in a rage. "To the Ducking Stool with her—to the Ducking Stool. Give her three dips, and see if that does not cool her body and quench her tongue of flame!" he cried.

And to the Weir Mistress Blake went. It was the last time the public of Bristol had an opportunity of witnessing the transverse beam and chair at work. A vast crowd assembled; but Mistress

Blake was equal to the occasion. She took to the water like a *duck*, though she was in no other way entitled to that endearing term. She never cried, never called out, and submitted to her baths in a manner to delight Dr. Gully himself, though certainly the water in which she was immersed was none of the most inviting. The ragamuffins of course had their jokes at her expense, but, as she was being unstrapped from the chair, she declared she would have her's too, and at the expense of "that hen-pecked craven, Mountjoy, who could only have heart to duck another man's wife, and not his own."

"And if I'm a *duck*," she added, in retort to the taunts of the crowd, "I'll make him pay for my *dripping*, if there's law in the land."

As the chronicles tell us, Mrs. Blake was as good as her word. At the expiration of the civic year, Mrs. B. made her husband enter a suit against his ex-Worship, and, by the instructions of Sir P. King, the jury gave such damages that no other Chief Magistrate was ever after found bold enough to put the stool into active work: so the institution fell into decay. The chair, the transverse beam, and then the post, disappeared in succession; the latter having been turned by an enterprising artizan into snuff-boxes, a pinch from which was ever after supposed to possess the charm and virtue of relieving a man from too excessive a dominion by his wife.

Of course, until almost the last day of his life, Mr. Alderman Mountjoy never ceased to hear of his judicial mistake. To escape the cruel jokes perpetrated at his expense, he never accepted an invitation to dinner during the season of *ducks* and green peas. To *water*-cresses he had a particular objection; and when he passed a crowd, any gamin, who had the opportunity, never neglected to cry *quack*. He did not like to enter the market, because the waggish old women—who regarded him at once as the slave and enemy of their sex—seldom failed to ask him to purchase some commodity unpleasantly reminding him of his blunder; so that Mr. Mount*joy* became the victim of chronic melancholy and sank into the grave a lamentable contradiction to his name.

The Alderman in Pledge.

Amongst the old entries in the Chronicles of Bristol is one of the time of the Commonwealth, which states that the Parliamentarian soldiers stationed in the city, unable to obtain their pay, seized upon an Alderman, and kept him a prisoner in their Guard-house, as a pledge for the money, until the authorities in London sent down a message to them to let their Worshipful captive go. One longs to know more of the incident than our meagre annals give—how the illustrious prisoner, for instance, did without his comforts while in durance, and how his turtle-eating brother Aldermen dropt small luxuries in through his prison bars to solace his durance. Times and Aldermen have changed since, a single fat-capon-lined civic dignitary was substantial enough to be considered and seized as a security for the arrears of a regiment's pay. Without, however, entering into an invidious department of the question, a reader of our local annals begs to offer a poor attempt at realizing the circumstance and situation referred to in this singular record, but before doing so, he begs to subjoin the passage from the annals of Bristol, in which the fact is given :—

"1647.—Nov. 23, letters were received by the House from Bristol of a mutiny in the garrison, and that the soldiers had secured an Alderman there, till they should have received a month's pay. The House sent a letter to the General to discharge the Alderman, and to prevent the like abuses by the soldiers for the future."

Alderman Girdle sat down to dinner in his great house in Corn Street. The house was worthy of an Alderman of the olden time, and the joints on the table were worthy of the house, and the fire in the wide fire-place (the fire-place is there still) was an Aldermanic fire—logs that defied winter, and the reflections of whose blazes danced in the polished sides of the tall silver tankards. There was something, you may depend on it, uncommonly good in these same tankards. The Alderman tucked a white napkin under his chin, and laid hold of his knife and spoon like a man who meant to dine as Aldermen dined, when their wealth and digestion were alike. He had laid hold on one of the tankards by way of lubricating the passage with a draught of Bristol milk, alias Spanish wine, before beginning with food, when the servant brought in a petition from some "poor caitiff," who stood shivering at the door in the cold November blast, and must starve if his Worship would not help him. Oh! it was terrible to see how red in the face and the gills the Alderman grew when he learnt that a hungry scoundrel was impudent enough to interrupt him at his dinner with a prayer for food. It was the greatest mercy he did not choke in his passion as he screamed to the servant to drive the insolent varlet off, but it was not necessary to do this, the shivering empty bellied Lazarus heard the roar of the Civic Dives, and made himself scarce.

But it was Dives' turn to hear another roar now. It was a deep angry shout which bodes no good, especially when heard in the streets of a city ; it seemed to proceed from crowds gathered round the High Cross, and then it swelled in front of the Tolzey, and soon was heard nearer and nearer until it shook the very windows of the room in which he dined, and even made the Alderman lay down his spoon on the napkin to go to the casement to see what was the matter. His appearance was the signal for a redoubled roar from a crowd of tumultuous soldiery, who no sooner saw him than they cried out, "Let us take the Alderman as pledge for our pay."

No sooner said than done. Up the stairs a number of them tore

and bodily seized the Worshipful Girdle, who in vain begged and entreated first for his liberty, and next that they would allow him to eat his dinner before they dragged him off. "What cruelty would force an Alderman from his victuals!" But they would not listen to his prayer, and told him in mockery they would take care the food was not wasted. Nor was it; the table was cleared even quicker than the Alderman could do it, and shivering Lazarus saw his fat but fasting friend hurried off to the Guard-house in Wine Street, there to remain in pawn until the soldiers' arrears were paid.

The soldiers were not only wicked but waggish, for they stuck out in front of the Guard-house, so that all who ran might read, a placard bearing the following inscription in large letters:—

"In Pawn, a BRISTOL ALDERMAN; if not Redeemed in three days, will be Sold to pay the Expenses of Maintenance."

Numbers crowded Wine Street that night to read the strange announcement, which could only be put up in a city and at a time where and when, owing to civil strife, law and order were set at defiance. Alderman Girdle was not the most charitable of men or the most popular either, so, though his Aldermanic brethren were scandalized at the outrage and sought to obtain his liberation, the baser sort amused themselves with jokes, evincing more turn for drollery than feeling for the poor Alderman. They carried bags about to the houses and shops affecting to collect alms for the Worshipful Girdle, and declaring that, since he had been taken away without his dinner, the smallest contributions of broken victuals would be accepted in his behalf. The soldiers were equally lawless: they stuck up a lantern during the night in front of the placard, while a sergeant stood at the door of the Guard-house beating a drum at intervals, and saying, "Here you may see, for a penny, that most wonderful of all wonders—an Alderman who has gone one whole day without his dinner!" And people actually paid their penny, and went in to gaze on the Worshipful Girdle, who, with napkin under chin, as he had prepared himself to eat the dinner that he did *not* eat, presented a very rueful but somewhat ridiculous sight. Before midnight, however, the Alderman paid for the privilege of a very handsome supper being introduced into his place of captivity.

The commandant of the Castle was applied to, but declined to interfere, so that a special message was sent up by the chamber to lay the case before the House of Commons, who immediately sent down a sharp reprimand to the military authorities for allowing such irregularities, and an order for the instant release of the Alderman. A deputation from the Tolzey proceeded to the Guard-house, in Wine Street, and having obtained his liberation, they accompanied him home. As he entered the door of his residence in Corn Street, the same poor wretch that accosted him on the day of his captivity stood shivering by his portals, but Dives was now an altered man. He had tasted the torments of hunger for a day and could feel for others, so he cried out to Lazarus to "go into the larder and have his belly filled."

MORAL.—Aldermen, before sitting down to dinner, remember the fate of the Worshipful Girdle, and don't forget that there may be some starving Lazarus at your door.

The Baker's Dream.

A LEGEND OF THE HOTWELLS.

A.D. 1668.—William Gagg, a baker in Castle Street, repeatedly dreamed of the virtues of the Hotwell water in his particular case, and was thereby cured of diabetes."—*History of Bristol.*

Mr. and Mrs. Gagg sat on a fine summer's evening in the small back parlour behind their shop in Castle Street over a toast and tankard. Mrs. Gagg, fat, fair, and somewhat more than forty, was on very good terms with herself, considerably more so than with her husband, who entertained himself in moaning over his own sufferings and the sins of other people, not forgetting his wife's. The good lady, however, was used to his humour, and to his complaint and complainings which were both chronic, as well she might after twenty years in which they had contrived to make their own fortune by making other people's bread.

"Mistress Gagg," said Mr. Gagg on the evening in question, as that worthy woman returned into the parlour after serving a customer with one of the few remaining loaves of the last batch, "Mistress Gagg, if I died, would you marry again?"

Now it so happened that Mrs. Gagg, who was an excellent and a provident woman, had repeatedly asked herself the very same question, that when such a melancholy event as Mr. Gagg alluded to arrived, she might not have to decide in a hurry on so important a point; but the answer she returned to her own enquiries, though of course well known to herself, she prudently determined not to communicate to a party so interested as William Gagg, who had a strange partiality for those posthumous topics, and on more occasions than one expressed himself very strongly on the abstract question of second marriages.

Mistress Gagg slily cast her eye towards an escritoire under the buffet in the corner of the parlour, where she had a vague idea of having once seen something tied with red tape, which resembled a will, and answered with a sigh and a directness which must have pleased a special pleader, "And if *I* died, Mr. Gagg, would *you* marry again?"

"If *you* died," replied Mr. Gagg, with contemptuous incredulity, "whoever thought of your dying?"

This put Mistress Gagg a little on her mettle—to think that her husband should monopolise all the sympathy and uncertainty of life, and she replied with spirit, "Why should not I die as well as other people; had not I a cough last winter, and a rheumatism in spring? but some people think they are the only persons who are ever sick, or have a right to die;" and Mistress Gagg sobbed at the idea of being thought by her unfeeling husband beyond the trials or uncertainty of all things human.

Mr. Gagg, who had a mortal apprehension of those sobbings, which too often ended in a stormy fit of hysterics, cut the present paroxysm short by shouting out there was a customer in the shop, and his wife, drying her eyes, was the next moment behind the counter, across which she gossiped with a neighbour on the cruelty of all husbands in general and her own in particular, until the amiable object of their conversation in the back parlour fell fast asleep. The truth was Mistress Gagg conscientiously believed that there was not a more meritorious wife in the precincts of the Castle, yet one who had succeeded in obtaining so small a portion of her merit, a conclusion in which her gossip, for sundry good reasons, fully agreed. It was surprising indeed what a harmony of opinion these two amiable women enjoyed on the subject of husbands. On the delicate question of second marriages, too, they touched, and had entered considerably into the deserts of a case of this kind which had occurred in the neighbourhood, when the voice of the awakening baker from within interrupted a colloquy so interesting to both, by shouting out that Mistress Gagg had had time to bake and sell a new batch, while she was disposing of a single loaf.

Mistress Gagg, having the fate of some wives who had been scratched out of husbands' wills before her eyes, returned with exemplary promptitude to the back parlour.

"Mistress Gagg," said her husband.

"Master Gagg," observed Mistress Gagg in reply.

"I had a dream," said Mr. Gagg.

"Oh, dear me," ejaculated Mistress Gagg, with lively curiosity, "and what was it about—was it about me, my dear?"

To this innocent piece of egotism Mr. Gagg retorted in a tone of something like contempt, "About *you* indeed, who'd take the trouble of dreaming about you?"

"Not dream about me," sobbed his wife, "and I dreamt three times about you the night you went out on the fort for Fiennes—but see will I do it again?"

"Nonsense, my dear," said the husband, a little softened by the contemplation of this trait of conjugal affection, now for the first time communicated, "I dreamt of myself. I dreamt I had drunk of that little well at Rownham, and was cured."

"Was that all?" said the wife.

"More, I suppose, than you'd wish to see come to pass," growled the husband, walking off to bed, leaving his wife to close the shop at her leisure.

Between twelve and one o'clock that same night, and while Mrs. Gagg mentally and visionally was in the land of nod, she was disturbed from her rosy slumber by her liege lord, who, after having repeatedly called his loving wife without receiving an answer, at length awoke her to a sense of her duty and the possession of the other seven, by a smart and pungent series of pinches, but not until Mrs. Gagg had associated those unpleasant importunities for some time with the subject of her sleeping thoughts.

"Do you hear, Mrs. Gagg?" cried her husband, in a voice shrill with vexation.

"I feel," said Mrs. Gagg, waking.

"That's a comfort," muttered Mr. Gagg; "I see my tongue would be little use without my fingers."

"I wish you'd employ one in holding the other," cried Mrs. Gagg, irritated at her husband; "what's the matter now?"

"I had the dream again."

"And is that the reason I must be tormented out of my rest, because you choose to dream?" demanded his wife.

"I dreamt of those waters, I tell you," cried her husband, annoyed to find so little interest taken in his visions.

"Nothing more natural," said Mrs. Gagg, "than to dream of water after having drunk so much canary; but go to sleep and dream again—the third time is the charm." The baker took his wife's advice, so far as the sleep was concerned, whether to dream or not deponent doth not say.

With break of day, however, Master Gagg

"Arose, and donned his clothes,"

and, much to Mistress Gagg's relief, was heard by that excellent lady to leave the house, shutting the hall door behind him. The shops and windows in Castle Street were still closed, and nothing was stirring, from the Castle to the Mint, but a few early sparrows and two scavengers and their brooms, as the baker, a large goblet in his hand, wended his way through the sleeping city to the Hotwells.

The tide was fast receding when Mr. Gagg reached the little rude spring which, oozing from beneath the cliff, sent its waters trickling over a surface of dark soft mud to the river. The morning was splendid, and the surrounding scenery, then wild and secluded, beautiful as now; but the water, to one of the baker's ardent palate, looked most uninviting. Still he had dreamt of its virtues and particularly in reference to his own complaint. He took courage and filled the goblet, but having filled, seemed very loth to empty it after having tasted the tepid and mawkish liquid. "It is not pleasant," muttered Mr. Gagg, making wry faces at the rock, "but then it may be good for my complaint," and he tasted it again, but did not like his second trial a bit better than his first. The baker looked round for resolution—a magpie chattered above his head, and two cows gazed across on him from the opposite side of the river, as if curious to know what that solitary man was doing at the dark little puddle at that hour of the morning. Such was the figure which the first visitor at this future fashionable watering-place then presented. Mr. Gagg thought for a moment, then taking a small bottle from his pocket, he poured a little high coloured liquid into the goblet of water; "A little drop of eau de vie," thought the baker, "cannot hurt its virtues," and raising the goblet to his mouth, he drained it. For six mornings following, at the same hour, Mr. Gagg was seen at the same place with the same goblet and flask, and each morning he grew sensibly better until the seventh, when he announced with great joy and rejoicing a complete cure to his wife, but whether owing to the virtues of the eau de vie or the water the learned for years afterwards disputed, and could not decide. However, there was this benefit from it: with the recovery of his good health Mr. Gagg recovered his good

temper, and none lived merrier after that than the baker of Castle Street and his loving wife.

. . . . . .

A century passed, and round this same spring, where Mr. Gagg had his solitary morning draught, might be seen Bath chairs, fashionable ladies and gentlemen, ennuyeux, aristocratic invalids, and loungers, all drinking the same mawkish water out of tumblers of crystal glass, with seemingly vastly more gusto and pleasure than the Castle Street baker evinced on emptying his first goblet, though in the later cases the lymph wanted even the qualification of Canary—

"or of thee, Cogniac,
Sweet Naiad of the Phlegethonic rill."

In the appearance of the Spring itself a great change had also taken place, and instead of meandering over dark mud from natural crevices in the living rock, it sparkled from pumps and pipes into shining marble. Inns and houses too, the latter in all the imposing array of parades, rows, and squares, sprung up around; fashionable loungers loitered in the genial region, and spent their time and their money amongst lodging-house and hotel keepers, who pocketed the gains and blessed the memory of William Gagg.

. . . . . .

Fifty summers more rolled by, and another change had come over the spirit and appearance of the place. The houses were deserted, the Bath chairs and donkeys gone, and the invalids and idlers had disappeared—the pump room was empty—the pump handle still—the water trickled unregarded and unvalued in pensive and melancholy drops from its spout; and a few old women selling a few old stones by the door were all the animate objects that met the eye. The waters were said to have lost their virtues, the place its salubrity: fashion had shifted, the spring was cried down, and the hotels shut up. *Sic transit gloria mundi*—AND OF THE HOTWELLS.

Buried without his Shirt.

"And having come naked into this world, I desire to go naked out of it; and direct that my poor body be interred without shirt or other covering." Such, as well as I can remember, were the testamentary words of Robert Strange, three times Mayor of Bristol, who departed this life in the year 1491, Henry VII. being King of England. I would give the precise sentence from his curious will if it were in my power to lay my hand upon that document, but it was one of the antique curiosities belonging to my late lamented friend Thomas Garrard, ex-Chamberlain of the City, and I can only quote, to the best of my memory, from a cursory glance which I had of the parchment many years ago. The dying request fastened upon my mind all the more tenaciously from the wonder and amusement it appeared to afford to my genial old friend the Treasurer. "He was buried without his shirt, Sir," he would say, "either because he thought the garment would do more good by being left behind to cover some poor man's back that wanted it, than by being placed in his coffin with him, there to rot with his body; or he was anxious to keep down the undertaker's bill, by having as plain an interment as possible; or he wished to make a show in his death of the humility he perhaps never practised in his life, when his charity was possibly like that of the man at Islington, of whom it was said

'The naked every day he clad,
When he put on his clothes.'"

This, however, was one of my departed friend's whimsical ways of accounting for old customs, according to modern motives. I think Robert Strange, three times Mayor of Bristol, meant to enunciate to his neighbours and fellow-citizens a solemn truth just as he was about to quit the world, in which he was probably as keen after the coins as any of his friends. The blunt old moralist "Iyeth," as the ancient Chronicle has it, "in St. John's churchyard in a monument of freestone near the Almshouse, which he founded," and which said Almshouse, good reader, you may daily see as you pass down St. John's steps so-called (though the steps are now gone,) which led from John-street to Broad-mead. I may, therefore, presume that the old gentleman was a parishioner of St. John the Baptist, and intended by the words of his will to cry out like his canonized patron, in a wilderness of selfishness money getting and personal assumption, a grim sermon to his over careful neighbours, on the old text, never to become obsolete, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity," upon which the preacher of all time to this day rings the changes. Possibly he had read in one of the stories of the old Crusades, which were more than two hundred years old when he was a boy, how the great Saladin had his shroud borne like a standard through the city just before his death, while a herald preceded it calling out "This is all that

remains to the mighty conquerer of the East !" So Robert Strange, when he could not have so romantic a proclamation made for him in his dying hour, made one for himself after his own fashion, in which he so far eclipsed the great Saracenic hero that, whereas Soliman wished it to be understood that he could only boast of a winding sheet, the old Bristol citizen resolved not to take credit even for that sepulchral garment, and desired to have it noted that he went out of the world as he unquestionably came into it, without his shirt.

Somehow or the other we have got (at least I have got) to regard the men and women of antiquity as so many tableaux. Whether in pictures, or in carvings, or in illuminated manuscripts I look back at them, I cannot hammer it into my head that those figures in quaint costumes, in ruffs, and hose, and doublets, and plumed beavers, were anything more than archæological curiosities : yet in the change of fashion, as we all know, from the days of Adam and his fig leaves down to the flowing toga, and from the flowing toga to the satin breeches tied with bunches of blue ribbon, and from the satin breeches again down to the peg-top trousers, the physical form of men under all these varieties of costume has been the same, and the hearts within beat with like emotions ; for if Mr. Darwin's development principle ever was in operation, I believe it must have been before the time of our first parents, and that we had wholly got rid of all our tadpole peculiarities long ere the "grand old gardener," as Tennyson calls him, cut and presented his first cucumber to mother Eve. You may depend upon it, then, that though more than three centuries and a half have elapsed since Robert Strange made his will and breathed his last in some respectable mansion in Broad Street, or even up Bell Lane, and though the men then moved about in very odd dresses such as you would only now see in a masquerade or on the stage, and Bristol dames were more grotesque figures than even modern fashions have made them—pretty well the same fancies and feelings actuated them that influence the present generation. The same passion for money-getting, the same personal rivalries and personal peculiarities that furnish matter for our gossipings and tattleings and scandal now, were then in full play; and perhaps Robert Strange was moved by them in his life-time—mixed in the city squabbles, talked at city feasts, fought it out with his great neighbours for authority in city matters, swung his purse over his head like other magnates, and only became aware of the vanity of the things which appeared so important to him in health and strength, as he got a near glimpse for the first time of the dark valley, through which all our ways will one day lie, as did that of Robert Strange 380 years ago, when Henry VII. of that name was on the throne of England. So Robert Strange seeing his time short thought he would make the most of it according to his own idea. And could one, who had three times filled the office of Chief Magistrate of the second city in England—who had walked to the Tolzey in scarlet-furred robe and gold chain — more effectually abase himself in the eyes of the world than by ordering that he should be buried without his shirt : that the man who had shone

in the scarlet and fine linen of the Mayoralty should be committed naked to his coffin? Perhaps while he was inditing this, his last will and testament, to those who stood at his bedside in some wainscotted chamber, close by the passing bell (a custom then always observed), was tolling at solemn intervals for him from the tower of St. John's Church, and those who went by on some business or pleasure under the gateway muttered, as in duty bound, a hasty prayer for the soul about to depart. But how think you, after all, was his sermon on the vanity of human wishes, as preached from his death bed in his last will and testament received by those who survived him? I cannot say, but the probability is that the first question his neighbours asked was how he "cut up?" Bless your soul, I expect whether it be in the Reign of Henry VII. or Victoria I., had half Bristol been buried by their own request without their shirts, by way of inculcating a great moral lesson, the other half would push along and struggle for the vanities all the same, as they did the day after Robert Strange's will was known and he was committed to his freestone monument on the south side of St. John's churchyard. I know the monument very well, the piety of some parish authorities enclosed it with a tiled shed, entered through a large doorway, like a coach house in which King Death kept his black equipage. Some thirty years or so ago I held the distinguished office of churchwarden of St. John's, when, in conformity with the wish of a number of Johnians, whose sleeping apartments overlooked this said burial ground, I purchased sundry pounds of mignionette seed, and sowed it broad cast over the graves and most thickly round the monument of the man who went out of the world without a shirt to his back; for I had a respect for the old fellow's memory, if it were only for his grim fancy for naked truths, and resolved that, should his spirit take to "walk the night," its first steps back upon earth from the meads of Asphodel should be into a bed of mignionette.

I am bound to confess, however, that for one who had so humble a notion in the particular of his sepulchral wardrobe, he had a very ambitious idea of a sepulchre; and, in the matter of carved free-stone, made up for a dozen worked cambric shirts, upon the principle laid down in an old writer (whose words I remember, though I have forgotten his name), that "tombs are the clothes of the dead, and a rich monument is one embroidered." But this seeming inconsistency in the business of burial is not confined to Strange: Whitson, who flourished in the reign of Henry VII.'s grand-daughter, Queen Elizabeth, gave orders for his funeral in the following words, "that this body of myne be buried without any superfluous charge or pomp;" accordingly we know, from bills extant, that his coffin only cost 14s., not much above the contract price now given by Poor Law Unions. Nevertheless, even a modern fashionable undertaker could not have made up a much prettier funeral bill than was incurred for the obsequies of the founder of the Red Maid's Hospital. The claret drank upon that "mournful occasion," at his house in Nicholas Street, alone cost £6 which, considering the price of wine and the rate of currency then prevailing, was enormous. Some years ago, the particulars,

as furnished from Alderman Whitson's papers, were given in the *Bristol Times and Felix Farley's Journal* in full, and the reader must have laughed—serious as the subject was—at the odd fashion in which the items were entered, "an epitaph, 10s.," being immediately followed by "mustard, 1d." Whitson, too, was buried in great pomp, notwithstanding his modest will; the trained bands of the city, with drums and fifes, having accompanied to the grave his body, which was followed by the Corporation in mourning gloves, 75 old men in black gowns, minute guns being fired while the funeral proceeded. Colston, too, had the obsequies almost of a monarch, and no night spectacle has since been half so grand as the line of torches that flared at the triumphal entry of the ashes of the conquering philanthropist, and which extended from the city bounds to All Saints. I can say, too, from occular proof and a sight of his coffined corpse, that not only was he buried in his shirt, but that the garment was of finest cambric and elaborately frilled.

Indeed, we can hardly now quite estimate the sacrifice that Strange made in wishing to go naked out of the world, unless we bear in mind "what a store" the men of his day set upon fine apparel. Many of them, in their wills, enumerate their wardrobes with evident pride in the inventory, and think it quite a compliment to leave their old clothes amongst their most valued friends, so that it was no unusual sight to see, after one city magnate was dead and buried, another city magnate strutting about in the well known Genoa velvet cloak, sad coloured doublet, or worsted hose of the deceased. We gain an idea of the extent and character of the wearing apparel of the Bristol merchant of that day, from the inventory left by Foster, the founder of the Almshouse of the Three Kings, at the top of Steep Street, who was, as nearly as possible, a contemporary of Strange's. He had "20 worsted doublets, 2 scarlet gowns [no doubt his civic dress used on high days], 2 velvet gowns furred, a black gown, a black cloak, and a hat and tippet of velvet,"—a wardrobe, which for extent and value, you would certainly find few Bristol Aldermen possessed of in our days, when we know the very first thing a man does when he quits the Council is to sell his robe to his successor, who drives a hard and advantageous bargain, aware of the fact that the former owner has "no further use of it." Perhaps it was with a lingering look at the clothes press in the corner of his chamber, where the furred gown and the velvet tippets were, that old Robert Strange dictated his will, and consigned himself naked to his coffin—

> As still in a voice of dolorous pitch,
> With a hope that its tone would reach the rich.
> He sang *his song of a* SHIRT.

This old shroudless Alderman founded the Almshouses under St. John's steps, which were rebuilt some century or so ago, but somehow or other he was so occupied in his last moments about the fashion in which his body was to be coffined, that he forgot to endow them with any funds; so the old ladies who inhabited the tenements had barely "dry lodgings" through his bounty, until

they got a grant from the Reynold's Fund. It is true that there is a story told by Barrett, of certain tenements outside Newgate and the Spur Inn, Wine Street, being left by Strange and embezzled by naughty vestry-men, who cut leaves out of the parish books and erased an inscription on the freestone monument in St. John's churchyard hard by to conceal their iniquity. But a descendant of the Shirtless tried this question against the churchwardens in 1629 and lost the trial, the parish authorities having "shown" that no such property ever belonged to Robert Strange. They also ingeniously questioned whether he had ever built the almshouses and were quite in the humour to prove that no such person ever existed, and that his tomb and will were myths and shams, when the plaintiff gave in, seeing that had he persisted in his suit, it would probably cost him so much that, like his worthy ancestor—through necessity, however, and not by choice—he would have to be "BURIED WITHOUT HIS SHIRT."

The Lady in White.

Mr. Barrett notices, in his History, p. 345, that "under the floor [of St. Mark's vestry] is a large vault, the entrance of which, in 1730, fell in, and, upon examining the corpses there deposited, supposed to be those of the founders of the Church, there was found a gold bodkin, entangled in some hair." One of the bodies, as we learn from a note in Mr. H. Smith's illustrated copy of Barrett, was that of "a female clothed in white satin (lying just under where the fireplace now is), having her robes fastened on the breast by a very handsome gold clasp, which was taken by and as I am informed, is now (1818) in the possession of Mrs. Becher, in College-green.—Evans.

This vestry was, it is thought, at one time, a mortuary chapel, and used as such by the family of Poyntz, of Acton, not far from Bristol. Barrett says it was formerly a confessional, with two arches in the wall between it and the high altar. The architecture of the room is very rich, the ceiling being beautifully arched with freestone, and having on it the shields of the Gourneys and Poyntz of Acton. The lady in white is conjectured to have been one of the latter family.

When Henry VII. came to Bristol, and was received with great state and pageants, he was accompanied by Sir Robt. Poyntz, then Sheriff of Gloucestershire, and at whose house he and his suite had stopped some days.

The last Prior or Master of the Collegiate Chapel of the Gaunts was J. Colman, who, with his brethren, surrendered the house and all its estates to Henry VIII., in 1534. There was still a tradition in Bristol, when the late John Britton was a boy, that one of the last priests of the "Bons Hommes" (as the brethren of the Chapel were called) retired to a little cottage in Gaunt's-lane close by, and there lived to a great age under the shadow of the old hospital, cultivating his garden in quiet and contentment.

"Beware of the 'clenched fist,' young gallant; and as for thee, froward wench, get thee to thy apartment, until we see whether bread and water may not cool thy ardent humour."

This speech was made by Sir Robert Poyntz, who, little expecting such a discovery, overheard the love plightings of his daughter Margaret with one of the young courtiers in the train of the King, who was enjoying for a few days the hospitality of Acton, on his way to Bristol. Near the old mansion, the site of which may still be traced, was one of those green alleys so common in old English manor houses. Two high thick hedges of clipped yew enclosed it on either side; and it was while passing behind one of them to another part of the homestead that the knight—without at all intending to be an eavesdropper—overheard the tender interchange of vows between the two young people, who had made such good use of their time that after a couple of days' acquaintance they had vowed fidelity. The clenched fist (or *poign*) was the rebus or pun on the family name, and it was to this Sir Robert referred when he warned the gallant against his wrath.

The worthy knight, however, had interposed too late. He could shut up his daughter in her room, and complain to the King of the breach of hospitality committed by one of his suite—both of which he did; but the young people had made an impression upon one another that parental anger or royal displeasure could not efface. They might never see each other again, but it would take years and years to make them forget that deep tenderness which a brief courtship had created.

Little susceptible of love himself, Henry ordered young Coleman (for such was the youthful courtier's name) to return to London, "since he would not retain a heart-pilferer any more than a purse-stealer in his train." Accordingly, when the King entered Bristol in pomp and pageant, being entertained with plays and pantomimic allegories at the High Cross and St. John's Gate, the plume of the banished Coleman did not flutter amongst that forest of feathers which followed in the royal wake, and which made such havoc amongst the hearts of the burghers' daughters as they looked out of their open lattices on the gay pageant.

The disgraced courtier returned to London, and, finding little chance of being reinstated in the King's service, he determined to become a scholar, and having already had a fair education and some literary taste he departed for Padua, with the hope of so distinguishing himself in the liberal arts as to become useful to the King in some civil situation, and thus attain distinction, which would enable him to go frankly to the Gloucestershire knight and publicly claim the hand already pledged to him in secret.

A longer time elapsed than he at first anticipated ere Coleman had realized even the first part of his plans. At length his friends at Court were able, not only to secure the King's forgiveness for him, but also a promise of employment in connection with one of those secret embassies which the peace-loving Henry was so fond of, and which he preferred to the ruder instrumentality of war for accomplishing his politic purposes. When, however, Coleman had got to Calais on his way back to England, high-hearted with the hopes of being ere long able to claim his betrothed—whose cherished love had been his inspiration and support in all his efforts—he met an old Court acquaintance who had some connection with Gloucestershire, and of whom he, as it were, casually and with that nervous affectation of indifference common in those deeply in love, inquired for the family at Acton and for Mistress Margaret. The latter, his informant (unconscious of the pain he was inflicting) said, was about to be married to a neighbouring knight when he left England.

From the moment that, scared by the angry father, the young pair parted in the *allée verte* of the old manor house, Coleman had heard nothing of his ladye-love; yet such was his trust in her faith and affection that, up to that instant, it never occurred to him to doubt the impossibility of her forgetting him or changing her mind. Nevertheless, his informant gave him such a circumstantial account of the "approaching marriage," that he could not discredit it. And indeed all the other said was, up to a certain point, true. Margaret had received an offer of marriage from a wealthy and well-bred neighbouring gentleman, and her father urged her to accept it with a parental despotism that left her no choice between that and a convent. Nevertheless, for a long time, she held out, and only allowed herself to be talked into a reluctant consent, when she saw her father meant to carry out his threat, and a friend, to whom she had confided her secret, suggested the probability—since she had never heard from him—of Coleman, if still alive, looking back upon their passion as little more than a youthful fancy. Just, however, before the time appointed for the marriage, she received a message,

that had been long in reaching her, from the Paduan scholar, and this reawakened so strongly the old feeling, that she determined to brave anything and everything rather than break faith with one who still kept faith with her.

There can be little doubt that the old knight would have carried out his menace and shut his refractory daughter up in a nunnery, but that death, suddenly descending upon him, shut him up in his grave before he could execute his purpose. Margaret was therefore free to wait the return of her lover, which, however, was prevented by the unfortunate meeting with the old court acquaintance at Calais. Coleman's informant only knew that she had given her consent, and his knowledge went no further. As England offered to the Paduan scholar nothing but disappointment and suffering, and the world—now that she in whom he had "garnered up his heart" had consented to be another's—held no attraction for him, he turned back, and weary and sick in mind, took shelter in one of the monasteries of the Rhine, where his learning and piety attracted much attention; and, having chosen the calling of a priest, he remained there some years. Here he made the acquaintance of the Abbot of St. Augustine's, who, on his way back to Bristol from Rome, rested for a few days in the Rhenish monastery. Possibly ApGwilliam (for it was he, the last of the abbots of Bristol) detected in his conversations with Coleman some home fondness for England, for on the mastership of the Bons Hommes becoming vacant, and the patronage of the Gaunts' Chapel being now in the hands of the Monastery, he wrote and offered it to him.

Perhaps there was something of the old human weakness—something of the wish to be near the place where his heart was once so deeply engaged—that determined Coleman to accept the offer; and he did accept it. On entering on the Mastership of the Hospital, however, he resolved to discipline his nature, and bring it down to his stern duty, so that he would not allow himself even to make an enquiry after her whom he now believed to be another's, in order that there might be nothiug to distract him from his sacred office.

But danger was nearer than he dreamt of. The Poyntz family had been benefactors hardly less liberal than the Berkeleys of the Hospital of the Gaunts' of Bellesvicke, as College-green was then called. Their offerings had helped to swell the dole to the poor made at the gate each morning, and to maintain the number of choristers who, in black caps and white surplices, daily chaunted the services in the choir. The dead of the family had been buried in it, and the living members often came to worship there.

After Prior John (as Coleman was designated) had been about twelvemonths in the Mastership, he was taking the confessions of penitents in the little chapel near the high altar. Having listened to the tale of frailty or otherwise as the case might be, of the last of those who waited by the little arches opening out from the inner chapel, he was about to quit the church, when a cloaked figure, whose dress and carriage bespoke her of a different class to the others, knelt by the confessional. This was Margaret de Poyntz, who, at intervals, used to visit the religious house so closely associated with her family. She now came to confess, wholly unconscious of who the new master was. She only knew there was a

new Master; but as she dropped on her knees by one of the little arches, and Prior John inclined his head to hear her story, the discovery of who the fair penitent was hardly left him strength to stand. The beatings of his heart might have told Margaret that no common confessor was listening to her story; but all unconscious of his identity, she continued to tell it—the story of a too loving heart that, sinking under its suffering, would still dwell upon a wayward human passion, when it should be preparing itself for heaven by more holy thoughts and discipline. Coleman dared not look at that cheek, but had he done so, a single glance would have sufficed to show him that a tender soul was then fast sinking a sacrifice to a true love. If he did not earnestly absolve or affectionately comfort the poor penitent, it was because he had hardly strength to speak, and the few formal words he uttered were husky and hardly audible through emotion.

Margaret rose, folded her mantle more closely around her, and quitted the chapel. But the Prior sat long in the confessional before he was able to go to his apartments, and for more than a week he did not appear in the services of the choir.

Soon after this, he received a summons to attend a dying person, a visitor at the residence of one of the Merchant Princes of the city; but before he could reach the house the spirit had departed. He entered, however, and stood by the bed on which lay the dead form of Margaret de Poyntz.

On the table by her side was a sealed missive for the master of the Gaunts. Coleman took it with trembling hands, and it was some moments ere he could recover strength to open it. Save a little trinket, it contained, however, only a request to be interred in the family chapel at the Bons Hommes, and that her body might be dressed in a white satin robe, which would be found in a certain place, and that in her hair might be placed a gold bodkin, which accompanied the letter. In this little ornament, dimmed though the Prior's eyes were with tears, he had no difficulty in recognizing his own love token which he had placed with his hand in those raven locks on the second evening that they met in the *allée verte* at Acton.

The instructions of the poor broken hearted lady were faithfully carried out; but whether she recognized in the Master of the Bons Hommes the old lover remained a matter of uncertainty in Coleman's mind, though there was much in the manner of her request to raise a suspicion that he was not wholly unknown to her. If the truth must be told, the Prior in his heart of hearts cherished this suspicion until it became a fond *hope*.

From the day that the remains of Margaret de Poyntz, clad in a wedding garment, were placed in the family tomb until the suppression of the Hospital of the Gaunts by Henry VIII., all the Prior's devotions were made in the little mortuary chapel; and when afterwards he and his brethren delivered up to the King's Commissioners the lands and rich plate of their religious house "under two seals of red wax," instead of returning to the Rhenish Monastery, where he would have been welcomed, John Coleman accepted the offer of the little tenement with garden in Gaunts'-lane, that he might live near the ashes of her he loved, and when he ceased to live he might secure a resting-place for himself near her grave.

Canynges Brewer.

[Not long since there appeared in the *Bristol Times and Felix Farley's Journal* a conjectural account of the death of William, the cook of the great Canynges, who lies not far from the tomb or monument of his master. I had hoped that the writer of that sketch would have done equal justice to the memory of another of Canynges' faithful domestics, whose ashes repose still nearer the grave of that good man, I mean his brewer, John Blecker, on whose tombstone may still be read the following inscription :—"*Hic jacet Joannes Blecker, pandoxator, cujus animæ propitietur Deus.*"]

The correspondent, with some ingenuity, suggested the cook's death to have been caused by his master's determination to retire to a convent and consequently to give up dinner parties, thus rendering no longer necessary the eminent services of the kitchen artist. I think I can show, upon quite as good grounds at least, that the brewer's demise was also occasioned by sore disappointment. And that he was equally esteemed by his master we may presume from the fact, that Barrett tells us he had seen a deed in which Canynges orders that the obiit of the man of malt should be kept in St. Catherine's chapel. In a series of papers which appeared in the *Bristol Times* some years ago, called "A Descent amongst the Dissenters," in one of these "The man without the pale" describes a colloquy which he had with an old fellow with a very white head, a very red face, and a wooden leg, who was making up some new mown grass, in the grounds of the Bishop's palace, at Wells. It was just after the late Dr. Bagot had been inducted. I give the scene as described by the writer himself :—

"Well, my worthy friend," said I, "this is a nice old place."

"Yes it are," said he; "I've seen it a long time—over 40 year."

"Then you've seen more than one mitred head pass in and out that gate?"

"Eh?" said he.

I found I was too ambitious in my diction; so to "descend from my iambics," I repeated aloud, for he was somewhat hard of hearing, "You have seen more than one Bishop in your time."

"Ay, three. The Bishop afore this, and the Bishop afore he again."

"Well, how do you like the present one!"

"Oh I believe purty well : we don't know much of un yet; but the ould Bishop afore the last, *he war the Bishop*—ah, he war the Bishop," he repeated, after a moment's pause, as musing he supported his chin on the top of his rake.

"Indeed!" said I, letting the wooden-legged piece of human antiquity continue the tale as he chose himself.

"Ah, he war the Bishop. He put six gallons to the Bushel," and the old man looked up in my face as if to challenge my admiration.

"That was a capital brew," said I.

"Yes sure, six gallons to the bushel! *Ah, he war a Bishop!*"

"But the last Bishop, what were his ideas on this important point?"

"Eh!"

"What sort of a brew was the last Bishop's?"

"Oh, 'twarn't bad. Nine gallons to the bushel—'twarn't bad; but 'twarn't like the ould Bishop afore him. Ah, he *war the Bishop*," continued the old man, dreamily relapsing once more to the object of his far gone but grateful recollection—the fine old prelate whose proportions were six gallons to the bushel. "Ah, he war the Bishop—I lost my leg brewing for him," and he tapped the wooden limb with the handle of his rake.

Well, thought I, I see to be remembered by posterity a Bishop had better depend upon his tap than his theology. But the old man seemed disposed to resume the conversation, so I let him have his way.

"Yes, sure," said he, taking up the subject, "the last one wern't bad—nine gallons to the bushel. But when he went daft, and his son the Chancellor, as they called him, came here—ah, he war the stingy one. Why he would allow only a bushel of malt to the 20 gallons—warn't that mean," exclaimed the old man with an expression of indignant contempt, which showed his ideas of the due and proper strength of beer and those of the Chancellor of Lichfield did not at all agree. "Twenty to the bushel! oh, he war a stingy one."

"But the present Bishop," inquired I, after I had allowed the old man's indignation to cool down—"what are his ideas of a tap?"

"Why you see as how we've had no brew since he came: but I hopes well from him. *He's sent the tubs to be washed!*" And the old raker limped off about his business, mumbling to himself as he tossed the new-mown grass together, "but the ould one of all—*ah, he war the Bishop: six to the bushel.*"

Now, I have some suspicion that the fatal breach between Canynges' brewer and the rebuilder of Redcliff Church, arose from very much the same difference of opinion as to what ought to be the proportions of water to that of malt in making the household tap: and that I am not without confirmation may be seen from the following manuscript *penes me*, but not one of the Rowleian lot, disinterred from the muniment chest by the industry of Thomas Chatterton.

"Holloa! what the deuce are they at down there in the kitchen!" Such was the exclamation of Master Canynges, as rosary in hand, he rose abruptly from his devotions, and coming out of his private chapel, stood on the landing at the top of the stairs, where he had the pleasure of hearing a most diabolical row in the servants' hall. They were not fighting; no, not a bit of it. They were in too good humour for that; they were laughing, and singing, and kicking up Mag's delights, doubtless believing that their worthy master was

too much engaged with his evening's devotions to hear or heed them.

"A song, a song," Canynges could hear Master Jack Blecker, the brewer, cry out. "Give us a song, old Smudge," and presently arose the voice of the scullion, knocking off the following ancient ditty, which, by some oversight, was omitted in the last edition of Percy's Reliques :—

> You have asked for a song, so I wont be slack in
> Answering your call, and here's to all;
> I sing the praises of Warren's blacking.

"Now by all that is lovely—(the Saints forgive me for swearing,") exclaimed Canynges, turning to his confessor, Father Rowley, who had followed him from the chapel and stood by his side on the landing in the dark. "Now by all that is lovely I'll kick every mother's soul of them out of the house this moment, and teach them to sing the seven penitential psalms instead of such profane trash. It is enough to drive a man mad to hear them making such a riot at this hour of the night in a peaceable house, and I, too, about to be priested. Hold my rosary, Tom," and so saying he handed his beads to the Friar, tore down stairs, and burst into the servants' hall before they could even say Jack Robinson."

"La! Master," exclaimed the brewer, emboldened by a cup or two, "you were the last man we expected to see."

"Or wished to see either," said Canynges, in a towering rage, "but I'll teach ye rapscallions to sing other vespers on the vigil of St. Catherine. Get out of the house this moment; every one of you pack, presto, be off. If I had to boil my own eggs and toast my own bacon myself, aye, or wash my own shirt, I would sooner do it than have a house full of such drunken revellers, waking the neighbours, and Mrs. Norton's child in the measles too*—a pretty thing, they will say, perhaps, that Father Rowley and myself have been making all this riot. Out, I say then; bundle, begone, for I don't go to bed till I have seen the back of the last of ye."

"Arrah, Master," interposed Jack Blecker, who was an Irishman, and a good Catholic, "don't be so hard upon us, it is not our fault at all."

"And whose fault is it, you pudding-headed Patlander," exclaimed the rebuilder of St. Mary's; "whose fault is it—it is not mine?"

"No, Sir," answered the brewer; "'tis the beer, Sir—'tis the beer. I made my last brew, Sir, only six gallons to the bushel of malt, and that is strong enough to make a saint or a statue sing."

"Oh, that is it," said Canynges; "then, upon my honour, you won't have to complain on that head again; I'll water it to your heart's content, so there won't be a song in a hogshead of it, and Father Matthew himself will say it is an innocent tap. But it is too late to night to go into business. Before you make your next brew, Master Jack, come to me, and I will give you the pro-

* Mrs. Norton was doubtless the respected lady of Canynge's friend the alchemist.

portions." With that Master Canynges stalked back again upstairs, and before another hour the household was fast asleep, the slumbers of the servants being as deep as their potations had been.

Next morning Master Canynges was in his counting-house, when John Blecker begged to see him. The brewer looked sheepish, as well he might, and a little the worse for his noisy carouse, as he had good reason to be.

"Well, Sirrah," said his Master; "and it is very clear from your appearance that your evening's entertainment does not bear the morning's reflection; but what is your business — have you come to ask me to pack you off, as you deserve to be?"

"Please, no, Sir," said the brewer, dropping his head, and looking uncommonly foolish, "but— but—"

"But what," said Canynges; "do you want a penance? go to Father Rowley and tell him to set you one: or suppose you walk from Redcliff to Temple Cross on your bare knees."

"No, Sir," said the brewer; "but the beer is out, and I came to ask you the proportions, as you told me."

"What out?" exclaimed Canynges, with surprise, "but I'll take care the next shall last longer. It will be less to your tastes, perhaps,—*Put twenty gallons of water to a bushel of malt!*"

Had the High Cross left its place by the Tolzey, and stooping its head walked under Nicholas Gate and over the Bridge to make a morning call on Redcliff Church, Master Blecker could not have evinced more surprise.

"Twenty gallons of water to the bushel of malt, Sir!!!" he repeated, opening his eyes, and his hair almost standing on end, at the idea of such washy tipple; "Why it will give us all the dropsy."

"And a good deed," answered Canynges, "but go and do as you are bid, Sir. I'll take care that you do not desecrate the vigil of St. Catherine again."

Blecker complied with his master's orders, and all the household and the parish turned up their noses at the poor stuff. Blecker's fame as a brewer fell from that moment, and with it fell his spirits too. He drooped and died in a week, his last words being that "twenty gallons to the bushel would be found engraven on his heart." His master, however, gave him a grave near the family vault, in the new structure, and Tom Rowley wrote an inscription, which will be found at this day inscribed on the tomb of the man of malt.

Miles Callowhill.

A STORY OF BRISTOL IN THE TIME OF PRINCE RUPERT.

1645.—Sir John Cadman was beheaded in the Castle for killing Miles Callowhill, an officer of the garrison.—*Outlines of the History of Bristol.*

During the brief occupation of Bristol by the Royalist forces, one of the few respectable families that remained in the city, after the previous sufferings and persecutions to which the loyal inhabitants were subjected by Finnes and the Republicans, that of Master John Everett was the most notable. His house stood on the north side of Frome Bridge, and was a pleasant and spacious residence, that part of Bristol being then a favourite abode with many of the chief citizens. He kept house as became one of the Cavalier school, and contributed not a little, by his pleasant entertainments, to dispel the gloom which war and pestilence had cast upon the once proud and gay city of the merchant princes.

His daughter, Maria, was celebrated for her beauty, and had not a few admirers and suitors amongst the officers of Prince Rupert's army, who were frequent guests at her father's house, and shared his hospitalities. Three admirers in particular she had; Sir John Cadman, a gay and dissipated Cavalier; Miles Callowhill, a young officer in the Hearts of Flame; and Ralph Deane, also bearing a commission in Charles's army. Maria, though in the main a generous-hearted girl, was rather vain of her beauty, to which not a few sonnets had been addressed by her rhyming lovers. She was, too, somewhat of a coquette, and for a time rendered it very doubtful as to which of the three possessed most of her heart. For each in turn she seemed to evince a preference, and thus inflamed the ardour with which they regarded her and the animosity which, after a while, their rivalry begat one against the other. At length there could be no longer a doubt as to the fortunate suitor on whom she was likely to bestow her hand. Her election was manifestly made in favour of Miles Callowhill, the youngest, and certainly the best of the three; for, though not wholly unaffected by the gaiety and perhaps some of the vices of the camp, he was of a genial disposition and an honourable nature.

It was quickly known that he had won the coquette's heart, and was received by old Everett as his destined son-in-law. In those troubled times, when the chances of war shifted victory so suddenly from one side to the other, courtships could not be long, and a day was named for their marriage.

In proportion to Callowhill's happiness were the chagrin and mortification of his unsuccessful rivals; and though before so much opposed to one another, Cadman and Deane now became

united in their enmity to their younger competitor. Deane was the first to make an overture to his rejected fellow suitor, and Cadman was in a frame of mind that made him only too susceptible of the dark suggestions of the other, who said that since the chances of both were destroyed by the "beardless popinjay," as he called him, they should rid themselves of his rivalry, and then enter the field, as he said, "in fair competition" for the capricious beauty, whose apparent levity of character gave them reason to hope she would be easily induced to transfer her hand to either, if her favourite were no longer in the way. In the lawlessness of those days, when quarrels, duels, and contentions were of such constant occurrence as to elicit no very rigorous inquiry, any project, however violent, was likely to be attended with a success and impunity that in a more settled state of things could not be expected. Cadman fell in with the views of his associate so far as they promised to rid him of his rival, but he stipulated that Callowhill's life should not be taken, only that he should be carried off and secured in some distant part until there was no longer any dread of his interfering with their suit. This, in the state of civil war England was then in, seemed feasible enough; and Deane, who was a deep plotter and had a still deeper purpose in mind, affected to consent to Sir John's conditions.

An opportunity offered for carrying out their plot, but not until the very eve of the day fixed for the marriage of Maria and Callowhill in St. John's Church. It was late the previous night when Callowhill quitted the residence of his betrothed, and the time was only too well suited for the purpose of his enemies. It was a stormy wild night as he left Everett's for his quarters in the Castle. Occupied, however, with thoughts of his approaching happiness, he cared little for the elements, and drew his large cloak closely around him, to protect himself from the gusts of wind and rain that came sweeping over Frome Bridge as he crossed it. He had only reached Christmas Street, however, when three men rushed upon him, and ere he could stand on his defence bore him to the ground helpless against such odds. Callowhill cried loudly for help, but the inhabitants were too much accustomsd to street brawls in a city occupied by soldiers and conflictiug parties to very quickly rush to the rescue at every sudden alarm, especially as a rapier thrust was often the only reward which they received for their interference. Still, Callowhill cried "Help, help, good citizens, murder," until a stab through the body silenced him. "Let us bear him off," said one of the assailants. "Too late, too late," cried the other, "the townsfolk are upon us: quick, let us save ourselves." The first speaker, notwithstanding, endeavoured to catch up the fallen man in his arms, but lights were seen and the people were heard to issue from the nearest houses, so his companion dragged him off the fallen man; not, however, without some difficulty, as the latter had got a dying hold of his doublet. The assassins fled, and the people only found the young Royalist officer on the ground, and almost in the death agonies.

The cries had been heard by the inmates of Everett's house, and they, with others, had come rushing over the Frome Bridge to

ascertain the cause. A light was brought, and Callowhill being recognised, was borne back into the house he had so recently quitted in high health and spirits. Maria impetuously threw herself on her lover in an agony of grief. He attempted to murmur something, but his words were inaudible, and he expired a few minutes afterwards. While the terror and indignation of the household were still at their height a person entered with a letter in his hand. It was directed to Sir John Cadman, Knt., and had just been found in the street close to where Callowhill had fallen. Suspicion immediately attached to the person to whom this missive was addressed, and then it was noticed that the murdered man held clutched in his hand a fragment of dress; the fineness of the cloth and scrap of gold lace adhering to it showing it belonged to no common man.

The sorrow and indignation of Everett determined him at once to take instant steps to detect the murderer. He hastened at once to the Castle, and, late as it was, demanded to see the Prince. He was introduced to his Excellency to whom, in a few words, he narrated the black crime which had just been committed in the very heart of the city, producing the letter and fragment of dress that had been extricated from the dead man's clutch.

Prince Rupert with an oath declared he would not sleep until the assassin was found, and, calling a guard, issued at once from the Castle. Just as they crossed the drawbridge some one was heard approaching. He was challenged by the Prince, and the person who answered was Sir John Cadman. "What, so late abroad, good Knight?" said the Prince, and, calling to the guard to arrest Sir John, he returned with his prisoner back into the great hall of the Castle.

The spectacle which the latter presented on being introduced to the light alone carried with it a proof of guilt. Blood was on his hands, his dress was disordered, and a large piece of cloth was torn from his laced doublet. "Produce the fragment," cried the Prince. It was fitted to the dress, and exactly suited the rent made in the Knight's doublet.

"Then a soldier of King Charles has been the base murderer of a brother officer," exclaimed the Prince, and his face flushed with rage. "Murderer!" repeated Sir John, involuntarily, "is he dead?" "Yes, dead," was the reply, "the blow was given with too fell an assassin cunning to leave a chance of life. Who were your fellow cut-throats?" "I answer no questions," was the prisoner's reply. "I confess my share in it—it is useless to deny it, and I make but one request. Prince Rupert," he continued, "my crime is great, but I have been a soldier, and you must acknowledge I wanted no quality of a soldier when I rode by your side in the charge of Edgehill; let my felony not foul a fair name. I deserve to die, and am willing to pay the penalty; but save not me, but mine, from exposure. A Cadman, even an unworthy member of a house of good gentlemen and brave cavaliers, should not dangle like a disloyal knave from a gibbet. The boon I ask is a block and sharp axe, and a death at daybreak within the Castle Court. I make the request on my knees," and the wretched man knelt at Rupert's feet.

The Prince was silent for a moment, and then said, "Your request is granted; you deserve no consideration, miserable man, but your house have served the King too well to have their escutcheons dimmed by your shame. You die as you request, at daybreak."

With the first gray of dawn, Sir John Cadman was led out into the Castle yard by six soldiers, and ere five minutes more had passed the headsman's axe fell with a dull sound, and there was one living man the less within the walls of the fortress.

Chapter II.

Three years after this occurrence, Ralph Deane and Maria Everett were married in her father's house by one of the proscribed clergymen, whose livings were sequestered by the Parliament. Cry not out against her too harshly, fair reader. Of Ralph Deane's share in the murder of her lover she knew nothing, nor was there the remotest suspicion. With something of fidelity, if we could imagine such a feeling in connection with such a crime, Sir John Cadman had refused to disclose the names of his accomplices, even though one at least was more guilty than he. Maria Everett's was a character, however violent her grief at the moment, upon which even the tragic fate of her lover made no very abiding impression, and Deane urged his suite with such patience and address that, at the end of three years, she consented to forego her first resolution—a resolution hastily formed over the dead body of her lover—to spend the rest of her life in virgin widowhood. But, as might be expected, their union was far from a happy one. Three children, the issue of their marriage, died in quick succession, and her life was further embittered by the conduct of her husband. The stings of conscience tormented him, and he sought to drown the remembrance of his bloody crime in wild dissipations.

Thus matters continued for years, until the very day at the end of December, 1654, when the order of Oliver Cromwell for the demolition of the Castle was received in Bristol, a stranger called at Ralph Deane's house. It was towards nightfall, and Deane was from home; but the visitor desired to see his wife, and to speak with her privately. She gave the man the desired audience, and waa soon horror-struck by his narrative. He opened the interview by asking her if she remembered the night of Miles Callowhill's murder. "An incident so terrible," she said, could never be erased from her memory. "But why ask the question?"

"For no purpose of idle curiosity," was the reply. "That bloody business has brought me here from beyond the sea at the risk of being hanged by the Protector as a traitor. You see before you one who took part in that crime; stay," said he as Maria started apparently with the purpose of flying from the apartment; "you need not be afraid to abide my presence for a few minutes, seeing that you have lived for seven years under the same roof with one whose share in that murder was more criminal than mine. Yes," he continued, noticing her horrified surprise, "neither the wretched man who suffered for the crime, nor I, who consented for a bribe to help them, meditated the death of Miles Callowhill, but only to remove him from your presence. Your husband, Ralph Deane, it

was who gave the death blow, and dropt the letter, and thus rid himself at once of two rivals for your hand."

"But miserable man," interrupted Maria, "why have delayed this revelation so long, or why make it now?"

"A few months since," replied the other, "I was at the point of death at Ostend, and was visited by a priest to whom I confessed the crime, and who gave me absolution only on condition that if I recovered I should hasten here to prevent Deane obtaining his object, by disclosing the secret to you. I find I have come too late to prevent the first, but I have fulfilled my promise and I trust eased my conscience of a sore burden by the disclosures I have made to you." And the man hastily quitting the place was lost to sight in the darkness.

When Ralph Deane returned home that night, he was informed that his wife had quitted the house two hours previously, and had left a sealed letter for him. He opened it and read these words:—"Murderer of Miles Callowhill, never again to be called husband: we part and for ever. I possess the proof of your most criminal and chief part in that bloody business. Betake yourself from this city ere the morning and you are safe from vengeance, so far as I am concerned. I desire not that your blood be on my hands, but I warn you never again to cross my sight.—Maria."

From that moment Maria was rid of her husband, and the tenor of her own life was changed. The remainder of her days was devoted to religion and active charity—to helping the poor, to visiting the sick.

Towards the close of the reign of Charles II., and when Maria had grown old and grey-headed, a woman called at her residence, to say that a stranger, who had arrived at her house a day or two before, was ill and, she feared, dying, and begged her to call and see him, as, hearing of her charity, he craved that she might visit him. Maria, now never loath to go upon a mission of mercy, though it was dark, followed the woman to her house—a poor one—in one of the back narrow streets leading into the Marsh. Maria followed her conductress up a flight of steps into a little apartment, where a man, worn with sickness and years, lay ill on a wretched pallet. She asked his name: the sufferer motioned the woman of the house to withdraw, and when they were alone, raising himself on his arm, he said, in answer to her question, "I am Ralph Deane, and having I trust obtained pardon from God for my sins, I have crawled hither with the hope of obtaining your's too, and from what I have heard of you since I reached this place, my hope is a confident one."

It was freely and fully granted by Maria. The sufferer closed his eyes, saying in a low tone "Then I depart in peace," and as his wife prayed by the side of his pallet, the spirit of the murderer of Miles Callowhill quitted his shattered tenement of clay.

Duck-Hunting Magistrates.

A CIVIC SKETCH OF BRISTOL IN 1247.

By exercise our ancient fathers stood,
Strengthened their nerves and purified their blood.

[1247.—Previous to the grant of land by the Monastery for the new course of the Froom, the site of Queen-square was called Avon-Marsh, and the present Canons' Marsh was named St. Augustin's Marsh. A part of Avon-Marsh, called Chanter's Close, probably the nearest to the wall of the city, upon which the north side of New King-street is built, had been exchanged by the Abbot with the Corporation for Treen Mills, on the south side of the Avon (the pond of which is now Bathurst Basin), with reservation of the privilege of hunting the duck there, 'for disport of the magistrates,' upon paying down a certain sum. The remainder of Avon-Marsh was at that time subject to overflowings of the tide.

[I may here say all the names but two introduced in the following sketch, and which were those of local magistrates, living and well known when it was written, have since vanished from the Bench and the world.]

What jolly old times! "It is better," they say, "to be a live drummer than a dead general," and as I could not be alive and kicking now and have enjoyed the civic sport in the 13th century, I do not exactly wish I was in the body and flesh in Bristol when Henry III. was on the throne of England. I am content, therefore, to let things remain as they are; but one does long to have been able to look at a grand field-day for duck-hunting in the pond of Treen Mills, in the year 1247.

'Egad, I have the picture before my eyes this moment.—The Magistrates are in the Tolzey or Council House, which stood nearly about where it stands now; they are hurrying off a few disorderly cases, and pushing justice to a hand-gallop, for they hear the yelping of their water-spaniels, which are being held outside under the colonnade or pillared and covered way then in front of the Tolzey. Or perhaps three or four retrievers are tied on to the railings that enclose the High Cross, at the meeting of the four streets close by. "Bow wow, bow wow," yelp the water spaniels, and their masters hear the call as they occupy the seat of justice, and as good as say, "We are coming, beauties; we'll be with you in a moment; and then, ho! for Treen Mills, and the ducks, and a day's sport!"

Well, well, how times are changed: just fancy such a state of things now! How Radicals would shake their heads, and local papers sermonise upon the "indecent exhibition," and a call for stipendiary magistrates arise from all quarters, and a memorialising of the Lord Chancellor and the Home Secretary take place. Yet, I dare say, the varlets in the days of Henry III. got as much

justice as they wanted or cared for, and that the very culprit at the bar, witnesses, officers of the court, &c., were all in a hurry to have the case finished, that they might be off to the mill pond and the fun commence. Ho! Messrs. Magistrates of the City and County of Bristol, don't you wish the days of Henry III. were revived, that you might make ducks and drakes of justice? Let us just transfer the persons of the 19th century into the practice and period of the 13th, and imagine the present bench presiding in the reign of Henry III. There is Inspector Bell outside the Council House, commanding a chosen band of P.C.'s, each constable holding a water-dog with chain and collar, while to a couple of sheriff's officers is committed the custody of a large wicker basket full of Aylesbury ducks, so necessary for the sport. Mr. Justice Herapath has got into a judicial wrangle with some attorney attending the Court, when Mr. H. O. Wills calls out, "Come, Herapath, be quick; cut it short; I hear Diver giving tongue outside; the day will be far spent before we launch a single duck." Just at the same moment Justice Lunell hears the familiar tones of his favourite, Neptune, "a dog that never let a feather escape him," and begs Mr. Brice to abridge the elaborate judgment he is pronouncing on some excise case, as he perceives Mr. W. Naish and Mr. Robert Leonard pulling on their waterproof overalls and getting ready for the sport, while General Worrall's brown Irish water bitch, impatient of the law's delay, has already intruded into the Temple of Themis and given unmistakeable proof that she thinks it is time the Court rose. Mr. John Nash Saunders has something to say on juvenile offenders, but his brother beaks will not listen to him, for the bills of the ducks are quacking clamorously outside, when Mr. Phippen, rising, and exclaiming, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," "moves that this Court do now adjourn to Treen Mills, and that the prisoner at the bar be sentenced to carry the basket of ducks to the place of aquatic sport." And it is full time they started, for the Town Clerk, putting his head inside the Court, protests he cannot attend to business, the dogs are making such an infernal row under his window: whereat Mr. Coates begs he will shut up his books for the day, and come along with them. The Mayor, however, faintly suggests that perhaps the Ratepayers' Protection Society will be kicking up a row about the outlay for ducks, while Mr. M. Castle thinks the best way to prevent any disturbance of that kind is to send the vigilant representative of that powerful body in the Town Council, Mr. Warren, the fattest couple killed in the day's sport for roasting, with the proper complement of sage and onions to season the same.

And now to the pond! There they go: P.C. 130 has opened the door of the wicker trap, and flushes a white Aylesbury bird, that goes plump into the mill pond, and wagging its curly tail, gives a defiant quack or two, as much as to say, catch me if you can. "Now, Bigg," cries out Mr. Justice Barrow, and the latter lets slip his curled "Bosquet," which is followed by Mr. Shaw's "Toby," that, unlike his master, is as cross a varmint as ever menaced a man's calves. Justice Lane's "Pitcher" next takes to the water,

while Mr. Justice Herapath and Mr. Justice Coates slip a couple of wire-haired Scotch terriers, which, though not to the element native-born, prove themselves "bitter weeds" to worry the game. Soon a Babel of sporting cries resounds from the busy banks of the mill-pond, and the miller, covered with meal, is shouting at the top of his voice from his water-hatch, while the Mayor is encouraging his dog "Sailor" to go in and win, and Mr. Shaw cries, "That's it, Toby; now for it." Mr. Justice Bigg hails his canine pet with a "Hie on, Bosquet," and Messrs. W. D. Wills, Leonard, John Evans Lunell, Phippen, Cox, and Hughes are all frantic with delight, having bet on the bird, to see the drake elude its pursuers. Verily, those were times to be in the commission, and times to be in Bristol, too; when care and commerce were literally thrown, like physic, "to the dogs" for the day, and men, instead of poring over ledgers or law books, and carving wrinkles on their foreheads and faces in the ceaseless pursuit of gain, hunted ducks; and the Magistrates, by giving the populace a day's sport at Treen Mill, kept them in good humour and off the Tread Mill. Well, the old mill-pond has been converted into a naval basin, and our merchants and magistrates now float ships where they once swam ducks, yet, for thorough enjoyment, give me the days when our jolly old peak-bearded ancestors in hose and doublet pursued aquatic sports, and made the old mill-pond resound with their cheery cries without ever making ducks and drakes of their own or the public business either.

Colston and the Widow.

"Every widow is my wife, and every orphan my child." This was the closing sentence of a neat little speech delivered by the rich bachelor, Edward Colston, at a wedding breakfast where he was the chief guest.

Wedding breakfasts people seem to think are generally stupid. This one, where the future philanthropist (he was a philanthropist then, though not fully developed) uttered these now locally well-known words, was stately, as most things were in those days amongst the city magnates. The daughter of Colston's old friend, Kitchen, residing in Wine Street, was that morning married in Christ Church to the son of another friend, and both families were solicitous to secure the company of the wealthy and unwedded merchant, whose great house in Small Street contained all that could be coveted save the *placens uxor*—if indeed, as some satirical people might suggest, the *placens uxor* is an object coveted anywhere except in the Tenth Commandment. Be this as it may, the magnificent Mr. Colston, who that morning wore his best full-bottomed wig, his finest lace coat, satin breeches and silver-buckled shoes, had just delivered a speech formal as himself, in which he wished all health and happiness to the young couple—to whom he had only an hour before given a wedding present of £500. Having "said his say," he resumed his seat, which was the seat of honour at the table, when a pretty but rather saucy young widow, who also was one of the party (a Mistress Fell), said, quoting his own motto and applying it to the occasion, "Go thou and do likewise, Mr. Colston."

The host, the hostess, and all the seniors at the breakfast table looked not a little frightened at the liberty the gay relict had taken with the great man. For though Colston was as good as a good angel, he was as proud as Lucifer, the fallen one. Perhaps no one ever before had ventured to make so free with that stiff, stately, middle-aged bachelor. They, therefore, felt some alarm lest he might be offended. But he was not, or if he was, he did not show it: for rising slowly for the second time, he said, "It has been suggested by my fair neighbour opposite that I should go and do likewise. Every one has his part to play in life, and mine is not to found a family of my own, but to do my best to help those of others who are not fortunate in life. Of wife or child, I hope I shall never feel the want; for *every widow is my wife and every orphan my child.*" (Applause.) Having spoken thus, he resumed his seat, and looked with a grand *de-haut-en-bas* expression on the lady whose impertinence he had so neatly rebuked.

There were no local newspapers in those days (for *Felix Farley* had not set up his press until twenty years later), and if there were,

I daresay they would not so soon have attained to the fine art in journalism of spinning out half a column under the heading of "Fashionable Wedding," as we now see daily done. Were the same marriage, or a marriage in the same rank, to take place at the present time, we should have all the particulars to-morrow morning, with a catalogue of the wedding gifts from the plated snuffers to the plated epergne. And particularly we should have Mr. Edward Colston's smart and pointed speech set forth in the clearest type and with the most pedantic punctuation. But in the absence of newspapers, a hundred tongues sent it forth over the city in the course of the afternoon. The Philanthropist was far and away the most distinguished citizen of Bristol, and anything he said was sure to be noted. So on 'Change and in counting-houses, on the quays and in all the principal households, this philanthropic epigram of his at the wedding breakfast was talked of before evening.

I cannot say whether or not the echo of his own little speech returned to him; but that night, as the Philanthropist sat in his fine old dining-room in his big house in small-street—a room still, I believe, partially preserved in the present new Assize Court—he could not help thinking over the circumstances of the morning. Above the sculptured fireplace was emblazoned his motto, "Go thou and do likewise," and every time he raised his eyes he saw it, and every time he saw it, it recalled the young widow's arch application to himself. "I wonder," he thought (for a man, however good and stilted in public in the eyes of his fellow-citizens, cannot avoid being occasionally upon familiar terms with himself), "I wonder if I had gone and done likewise twenty or five and twenty years ago, whether I should be any the happier now?" And the Philanthropist fell to musing again: musing over his knowledge of family affairs and secrets in other households, and the trouble and anxiety sons and daughters had occasioned many a citizen of his acquaintance; for he was regarded as a "rock of sense," and deferentially consulted by people he condescended to know when they were in domestic distress or any kind of strait. Taking all things into account, therefore, he *almost* decided that he had done best in not "doing likewise." "Almost," I say; for there was just that hesitation in coming to a conclusion which made the qualifying adverb in Agrippa's little speech so important.

There he sat, Edward Colston, the true type of the Merchant Prince, the first citizen of no mean city and its representative, or soon to be. He lived in ease and stately affluence in a grand abode, and the polished oak furniture and the family pictures reflected the pleasant light from the deep recessed fireplace; but still these words of the wise man would persist in suggesting themselves to his mind—"It is not good for man to be alone."

And *he* was alone—a pleasant state enough occasionally. I myself enjoy the temporary celibate condition once a year, when the wife and children go for the month to the seaside—say to Burnham—and leave me to look after the cook and the house cat, and there is quiet, a strange quiet, within the four walls, and I almost hear the sound of my own lips as I puff peaceably at my evening pipe. But better, like Alexander Selkirk, "dwell in the midst of alarms"

than reign in such a solitude for more than a month or six weeks at most. So that by the time my wife returns and lets loose the little troop of domestic Bashi-Bazouks again all over the building, I have just come to the conclusion that the worst thing about the tower of Babel was not its confusion of tongues.

The Philanthropist did not like noise, but in that great house and in that stately Gothic room, which looked out on a courtyard far removed from the few sounds that still lingered in Small-street, the silence was too profound, and a pair or two of little trotting feet might have been felt as a relief even by the old bachelor. Again he raised his eyes to the line above the mantel-piece, and again read the words, "Go thou and do likewise." Again, too, he re-opened the mental discussion with himself as to whether or not he had done the wise thing in breaking off just a quarter of a century before with that young lady who (tradition says) rebuked him—a little too soon, however, for her own interests—for being too liberal of his money.

How long he would have pursued his reverie, I cannot say, had not a servant, in rich but subdued livery, entered the room and informed him that "A lady desired to see Mr. Colston."

The Philanthropist had heard the solemn old house bell sound a little before, but softly, as was due to the distance; so that he was not wholly unprepared, late as it was, to hear that there was a visitor.

"Her name?" asked the Philanthropist.

"She gave no name, sir: but told me it was sufficient to say, 'A lady wished to see Mr. Colston, for Mr. Colston would always see a lady.'"

"Where is the lady?"

"She is in the tapestried parlour, sir."

Colston walked leisurely along the corridor which led from the room in which he was to the apartment hung with Arras-work. A lady with a cowl or hood was sitting down, and was rising as he entered, when he said, "Pray, madam, retain your seat."

His ability and willingness to help the distressed were so well known in the city that he had very frequent applications made to him, and he naturally concluded this was one of them. But as the lady did not speak at once, he said, "Can I be of any use, madam? May I inquire why I am honoured with this call?"

A deep sigh came from under the hood, and something even like a sob; but as yet no other answer.

The rich bachelor felt a little uncomfortable—even though it was in his own house. Here was, so far as figure and dress allowed him to judge, a young woman and a lady in distress, and almost going to cry—if indeed she had not already begun to cry—in his decorous house, at that comparatively late hour. So he said, with a little more peremptoriness, in which a touch of alarm was traceable, "May I ask, madam, whom I have the honour of receiving in my humble abode?" For under no circumstances could Edward Colston use aught but stiff and formal phrase.

He got no answer beyond another little sob, so he repeated the question. His surprise, therefore, may be more easily imagined

than described, when his mysterious visitor replied, rising from her seat as she did so and coming towards him, as though she would throw herself on his neck, "*Your wife*—your acknowledged wife, Edward Colston!"

"My acknowledged wife!" exclaimed Colston, with an emphasis nearer to a scream than he had ever before indulged in. "I never was married, madam, as all the world knows, and I never *acknowledged* you or any one else as my wife."

"Oh yes, you did—you did," she cried, coming again towards him, while he retired a step or two to avoid the threatened embrace. "You said this morning '*Every widow was your wife,*' and I am (and as she spoke she threw back her hood and showed the bright face and arch eyes that he had seen at the wedding breakfast), I AM A WIDOW—the Widow Fell! and I come to claim my husband, according to his own word, and Edward Colston never goes back of his word!"

The Philanthropist was nearer laughing then than he ever before was in this life. But he did not; for he remembered that a liberty had been taken twice with him that day. The widow, however, laughed enough for him and for herself. She saw and enjoyed his surprise and fright, and then bowing, turned to depart, saying, as she left the room, "Go thou and do likewise."

"Score one for the Widow. I have done it!" she said to a couple of friends, who waited for her at the top of Small-street, and who were her confidants in the "lark" she undertook to play off upon the stiff old stately bachelor, in return for the sharp hit he had given her at the wedding breakfast.

Edward Colston soon afterwards removed to Mortlake, grievously offended at anyone having dared to play off a hoax upon so good and so great a gentleman.

Good Value for a Dinner.

The episode in our local history which takes my fancy most is that of Sir John Duddlestone, who, at the close of the 17th century, got his family entitled, if not ennobled, in return for a family dinner.

It is a hearty, homely incident in our annals, most encouraging to the virtue of hospitality, and seems to this day to shed upon the records of All Saints Parish the genial flavour of roast beef and plum pudding. It is, too, in an eminent degree characteristic of old Bristol, which if impregnable in any respect was in this, that it could never be "taken by surprise" in the matter of eating and drinking.

Barrett, in recounting the tombs and monuments of All Saints, says:—

Sir John Duddlestone, Bart., lies buried here, with Dame Susanna, his lady, under the first pew coming into the church on the right hand at the north door. He was created a baronet January 11, 1691. He was the first baronet of his family, and was an eminent tobacco merchant in the house fronting the south side of St. Werburgh's tower, the back part of which is now called Shannon Court, within the parish of St. Werburgh; who, on Prince George of Denmark's arrival to see this city, was the first person that invited him to his house, whereupon when that Prince came to London he got him first knighted, and afterwards a baronet's patent.

There is, it is true, some little mystery about the good Knight and his lady, and antiquarians have been investing it with more. Some scribbling sages in "Notes and Queries" have even tried to explain away the whole story; but as Barrett probably lived within fifty or sixty years of the Duddlestones' time, and must have recorded a circumstance which was then comparatively fresh in the minds of Bristol folks, I should far prefer his blunt word to the most ingenious scepticism of modern critics. Here is recorded the *death* of the Baronet and his dame, which is better evidence of their having *lived* than any conjectures to the contrary which doubters can produce. There is their grave by the north porch of All Saints, where, as Jack Cade observes, "The very stones survive to this day as witnesses of the fact." These stones and bones and record of burial may all be cited against the cavillers, whose strongest argument is that as Prince George had been to Bristol before in company with his father-in-law, James II., the magistrates must have known him, and knowing would not have left him to the casual entertainment of a plain citizen like John Duddlestone, who, or his wife (most probably the latter), had been a boddice maker before he had entered the Virginian trade. His Royal Highness, say the doubters, would not have gone to so homely a table as old Duddlestone's when the utmost civic magnificence was at his service; but we know that when the Duke of Cumberland, some fifty or sixty years later, was returning through York after his Scotch victories he declined the invitations of the Archbishop, Lord Mayor, Dean and Chapter, and went and supped with the Precentor, Laurence Sterne's uncle; and there is no reason to suppose that Prince George (who was an easy homely sort of royalty) might not

have just the same fancy for a quiet family feed in preference to the laborious and elaborate state of the civic chamber—admitting that such was tendered to him. But of this I am not so sure. The magnates and magistrates of Bristol were still smarting from the "go by" which Popish James gave them, and the slights which he cast upon them, and they probably took this occasion to show their sense of the wrong and insult offered them, by a pointed neglect of the Monarch's son-in-law. The fact probably is that the circumstance of the illustrious visitor being allowed to saunter about so long without anyone asking him to dinner had some political meaning in it, and Duddlestone was rewarded less for the feed he gave the Prince than for the public protest which he thus practically made to the party spirit of the more lofty local dons, who, in envy of a man who made such capital profit out of their mistake, set to sneering at the presumption of the "boddice-maker," his homely menage, and his wife's "blue apron." But Duddlestone had the laugh at them, as we all know, in the long run; and the incident has descended to us as an encouragement to prompt and courageous hospitality. Never be afraid to ask a man to dinner when you have anything to offer him. "*Bis dat,*" says the proverb, "*qui cito dat* :" and while others were probably thinking of and wondering what they had in the house, and whether it would stand so distinguished a guest, the tobacco merchant went straight up to the princely Dane, whose soft bland easy manner could deter no one, though he was allowed to wander up and down the Merchant's Walk without any one asking him if he had a mouth, lest he might open it and swallow them up—Duddlestone, I say, walked straight up to him, and, saying something in excuse for his plain fare, asked his Royal Highness point-blank home to pot luck. The Prince did not annihilate him with a glance, or scowl at him as an impudent snob for his presumption, but, it may be, said "I'm your man, my friend : name your hour." Or if not in these exact words, something to the same purpose.

Felix Farley's Journal was not started until 23 years later, otherwise we could have got from its venerable pages the precise expression, the *ipsissima verba*, of the Prince. In these days of newspaper enterprise, you would, in fact, not only get the exact words but a few more particulars in addition : the weight of the piece of beef upon which the illustrious visitor dined, and the person who fattened the ox out of which it was cut—the weight of the pudding, and the name of the grocer who supplied the currants.

As it is, we must be content to imagine all this, as well as the conversation with which Duddlestone and his dame entertained their guest, whom they probably had all to themselves, with merely the vicar of All-Saints, John Rainstorp, to say grace and keep the talk up. If, however, there were any deficiency of talk in the second floor parlour of the house in Corn-street opposite St. Werburgh's on this same afternoon, there was no lack of gossip outside, when it became generally known that the Duddlestones—at whom the other magnates, I expect, turned up their noses—had nothing less than a real live Prince to share pot-luck with them. How "thronged the citizens" in front of the house, haunted the

street outside, looked up enviously at the window on the second floor, behind which the Royal Anne's husband was dining. I wish I could get a Prince to dine with me. I'd become quite the fashion after that, and need never feed at home on my own hashed mutton. Every person would be asking me out then: for to entertain a man who entertained a Prince would be like entertaining a Prince second-hand.

Well, though we cannot exactly say what they had for dinner, we may fairly infer that they dined at two, or a little earlier; for Pope and Addison, and most of the good people of the period dined at two. For convivial enjoyment, I think a later hour preferable, but for more useful and nutritious purposes an early meal is best; and I suspect our great grandfathers and great grandmothers of the Duddlestone's time were mainly guided by the latter and more vulgar consideration in matters of feeding. "Barbarous nations," says De Quincey, in his chapter on the Casuistry of Roman Meals, "and none were, in that respect, more barbarous than our own ancestors—made this capital blunder: the brutes, if you asked them what was the use of dinner, what it was meant for, stared at you, and replied—as a horse would reply, if you put the same question about his provender—that it was to give him strength for finishing his work! Therefore, if you point your telescope back to antiquity about twelve or one o'clock of the daytime, you will descry our most worthy ancestors eating for their very lives—eating as dogs eat, viz., in bodily fear that some other dog will come and take their dinner away. What swelling of the veins in the temples (see Boswell's Natural History of Dr. Johnson at Dinner)!—what intense and rapid deglutition!—what odious clatter of knives and plates!—what silence of the human voice!—what gravity!—what fury in the libidinous eyes with which they contemplate the dishes!—but, above all, what maniacal haste and hurry, as if the fiend were waiting with red-hot pincers to lay hold of the hindermost!"

The Prince had no great reputation for conversational vivacity, and Mr. and Mistress Duddlestone must have had so slight an acquaintance with Court gossip, that they could have found few common topics of interest. But I daresay they got on as well with their royal guest as Railway King Hudson and his wife did with the old Duke of Cambridge, when he visited the locomotive magnate at his great mansion near Albert Gate, and it is said his Royal Highness inquired if they "knew Lord R," a Yorkshire nobleman. "Oh, very well, your Royal Highness," chimed in both, "he often sleeps with us when he comes to town." "The deuce he does," rejoined the jolly old Duke, taking them literally at their word; "close quarters that, close quarters that—three in a bed."

The little local scandal-mongers were fond of telling how Mrs. Duddlestone was caught in her blue apron, and apologized to the Prince for being found in so homely a garb. But all this I take to be weak inventions of the enemy. Be this, however, as it may, of two things I am satisfied—First, that the tobacco merchant kept a good table and had a decent dinner every day, or he would not have ventured to ask the illustrious stranger home at a hop in this fashion. And, secondly, that his wife had a superb temper, to

receive with equanimity so grand an addition to their mid-day meal: for which of us could calculate upon our better half not being terribly put out by so unlooked for an incident? In most households a far less important personage dropping in on the domestic circle would create as great a flutter amongst madame and the kitchen ministers as a hawk in a dove-cot: still, with a good piece of roast beef and plum pudding one need not be afraid to face even a Royal Prince. It is good enough for a King; and Duddlestone doubtless could add a prime bottle of "Bristol milk" to the impromptu entertainment.

"The proof of the pudding," and the beef, too, is said to be "in the eating;" and the proof that the Prince enjoyed his victuals lies in the fact so positively asserted, that he gave the hospitable couple an invitation to the Palace, should they ever visit London when he happened to be there. They did visit it, but not until the Royal Dane's wife was Queen of England, when (the story goes on to say) the Bristol couple presented themselves at the Royal residence in due form, and were not ignored, or snubbed, or sent about their business, or treated to a cold shoulder, as some of our unpresentable country friends might be, if we happened to get up in the world high above their heads, and did not wish our great neighbours to know that we ever had such homely acquaintances. They got a hearty invitation for next day, and, nothing abashed, accepted it. The story is told of Barnum that having been entertained by a New York magnate, and having partaken of three courses, on the fourth making its appearance, he cried out, "he could eat no more, but would *take out the rest in money*." The tobacco merchant and his wife were no doubt fully satisfied before the palace banquet had half finished; but when their appetites failed, her Majesty had it in her power to further gratify them. As they were about to depart, the Queen made the worthy Bristolian get on his knees, and, taking the sword from the Prince's side, struck the kneeling citizen on the shoulder, and told him, as his good dame afterwards described it, to "Stan' up, Sir Jan Duddlestone."

Here again we miss the local chronicler: for had Bristol then possessed a newspaper, we should not be left in the dark, as we now are, as to the manner in which the new knight and his wife were received by their envious neighbours when they returned home, with all their blushing honours thick upon them. For my part, I think they eminently deserved their courtly reward, and the whole affair carries with it a sound substantial moral, that a good wife ought always to be glad to see her husband's friends even at a moment's notice, without looking black at him; for she does not know what day he may pick up a Prince, who may have it in his power to reward her homely hospitality by making a knight of her liege and a lady of herself. For my part, I am quite resolved, if ever I get the chance of asking Albert Edward to take pot luck with us, I'll embrace the opportunity, with the hope that we shall be as handsomely recompensed for our civility as was the Bristol tobacconist, who rose up Sir John Duddlestone, though he now lies low enough with his good dame by his side within the north porch of All Saints' Church.

Billy Miller and his Clerk;

A PAGE OF BRISTOL HISTORY ENLARGED.

In 1734 I went to Bristol with some recommendations to eminent Bristol merchants, but in a few months found that scene wholly unsuitable to me.—*Autobiography of David Hume, the Historian.*

Hume was clerk to Mr. William Miller, residing in Queen-Square : but David's taste in English composition being offended by the Merchant's letter book ; and volunteering to reform it altogether—"I'll tell you what, Mr. Hume," exclaimed his employer, "I have made £20,000 by my English, and I won't have it mended."—*Note in Evans.*

1734.—The sect called Methodists first appeared. — *Outlines of Bristol History.*

In the year 1734, the Mulberry Tree Tavern, in Broad-street, was the favourite evening rendezvous of our substantial citizens. A couple of shops facing the entrance to John-street now stand on what was its street front, which was recessed a little from the flagway, and had seats and other sociable conveniences for the casual customer, who chose there to drink his horn of malt, or cup of sack, or glass of punch, and watch city life as it rolled by in the well-frequented thoroughfare. The chosen retreat, however, of the regular frequenters of the tavern—the social knot—was the courtyard in the rear, in the centre of which stood a large mulberry-tree, which gave its name to the house, and under the shadow of which congregated every evening many of the most wealthy Bristolians ; amongst them even merchants, who, so proud of their money and their commercial position, were yet not too proud to meet in this easy and convivial fashion for enjoyment and local gossip.

The little court still remains but the old tree is gone, and the surrounding tenements, instead of being appropriated to festive purposes, are suites of solicitors' offices. Yet on a summer evening, at the time I refer to, it was a sight to look in at the little quadrangle, and see on the forms and before the benches under the spreading boughs of the old mulberry, the fathers of the city, long pipes in mouth and tankards before them, gravely telling the news and talking over the prices of colonial commodities, while now and again a ripe rich fruit dropped from the branches above them, the only act of levity in the seniors being an occasional attempt, if they saw the purple berry falling, to try to catch it in their glass or tankard before it touched the ground—a feat which, when accomplished, they were very proud of. Besides this, however, there was no other symptom of exhilaration amongst the company that assembled round the great trunk of the aged mulberry tree; for a true type of what one might call the hereditary Bristolian were the men of that day. Their's was a substantial decorous festivity ; their hard heads would stand almost any amount of punch and tobacco, without betraying them into any exuberance or forgetfulness

of self. There was not one of them, as they rose from their benches in the Mulberry Tree-court to depart at the close of the evening sitting, that was not capable of guarding his interests in a bargain, if he had to make one at that moment, or who would forget in any stage of festivity his sense of self-importance. For your true-bred Bristolian was always a rigid stander up for his own dignity, whatever the state of life to which it had pleased God to call him. The tradesman, as a tradesman, would have his due of personal deference, and yield it also (let it be confessed) to his superiors. There were degrees of merchants, the little merchants and the magnates—the Merchant Princes, "the Princes of Naphtali and Zebulon," as a witty Canon called them. Yet to some extent—with, perhaps, the exception of the very highest — they met in common, though not on equality, at places of symposial assembly like the Mulberry Tree and the Stone Kitchen, and at the latter place, it must be remembered, they had even a ducal Howard for their guest. Nevertheless, even at these resorts, social distinctions were observable—more implied, perhaps, than expressed. The merchant was an oracle, and delivered himself like an oracle amongst the men of lesser local note, the substantial shopkeepers and attorneys, who then deferred perhaps more than they do now to monied customers and clients. All joined in the conversation, which to a great extent was general, but they waited for the leading opinion of the leading man of the *coterie*, who delivered his sentiments in a pompous tone and with an authority which showed he expected none but a person as rich as himself to differ from him.

To this downright and dogmatic class, belonged Mr. William Miller, of Queen-square, merchant, and afterwards partner in the first banking-house established in Bristol. He was the looked-up-to of the Mulberry Tavern lot, not so much for his enlarged views as his large purse and a certain shrewdness which secured worldly success. In winter his was the seat next the broad fire-place in the inner room kept specially for the evening "set," and in summer a high-backed bench against the trunk of the mulberry tree, was his prescriptive post of honour, which nobody attempted to take even though he should be a little late in making his appearance. Here, pipe in hand "Billy Miller," as he was called behind his back, but "Mr. Miller" to his face, laid down the law, while the listening tradesmen of Wine-street, Corn-street, and Broad-street, accepted as absolute wisdom everything that fell from his lips. This would have spoiled perhaps a man of even more education than Miller, so that we must excuse him if amongst the *coterie* of the Mulberry Tree frequenters he was pomposity and dogmatism itself.

One warm June evening after he had taken his seat under the old tree as usual, and had given a few puffs of his pipe and taken a few sips of his tankard, he gave vent to the following interjection: —"A pretty pass indeed we are come to! I suppose it is the work of this rascally Pretender, that rebellion should begin to show itself in one's very counting-house!"

"Aye sooth, aye sooth," chimed in the obsequious company, "they are queer times, indeed, our lot is cast in."

Having given expression to this general sentiment, they waited for Mr. Miller to disclose the particular event or events which led to this solemn conclusion, and after a few puffs more the self-important merchant proceeded. "A couple of months ago a young man from Scotland came to me with recommendations from correspondents in Edinburgh, at whose request I took him into my counting-house, and what do you think I detected him in to-day?"

"Peculation, robbery," said two or three voices at a time.

"No, no," said Miller, "I have nought to say in disparagement of the young Scotchman's honesty: but he actually presumed to correct, as he called it, the language of my letter book. He has positively been mending my writing, if you please."

"What impudence! did you ever!" exclaimed the *coterie* round the mulberry tree, and they puffed away their pipes more vigorously than ever, as if to give vent to their indignant effervescence.

"Well, what do you think I said to him," said Miller; "I said to him, Mr. Hume (for that is his name), I'll tell you what, I have made twenty thousand pounds by my English, and I won't have it mended; and when you have made a tithe of the money by your composition, as you call it, I will give you leave to correct mine."

The applause that followed this specimen of cutting retort, was only what the speaker expected. He raised his can to his lips, and then resumed his pipe with manifest self-complacency and satisfaction, giving his audience time to admire and repeat his clever retort. But even Billy Miller's self-possession was hardly proof against the unpleasant surprise that awaited him, when the smoke clearing away a little, he saw seated on a bench a few yards from him, a young man, about three and twenty, of pleasant intelligent features, rather high cheek bones, a full firm mouth, and somewhat aquiline nose. Pretty Mistress Newth, the landlord's daughter, was serving him with a glass of Geneva and water, and he had already begun to draw at his pipe like the rest of the company. He had only just sat down, so it was a moot point if he heard or understood the last part of the conversation, but whether he did or not it was impossible to guess from his pleasant and placid manner and the look of quiet curiosity with which he regarded the company. Miller, however, adroitly let his friends know that it would not be civil to pursue the subject any longer in the presence of the very person to whom it related, so he called out with a nod of condescension to the new comer, "My service to you Mr. Hume, glad to welcome you to the shelter of the mulberry tree." The eyes of the company turned to the presumptuous young clerk and embryo-historian, as David bowed with well-bred decorum to their salutations; for the Scotch youth came of good family, and even at this time he justified the character which he afterwards gave of himself when on the eve of his death in the fullness of his fame. "I am," said he, "or rather was, a man of mild disposition, of command of temper, of an open social and cheerful humour, capable of attachment but little susceptible of enmity, and of great moderation in all my passions; my company was not unacceptable to the young and careless as well as to the studious and literary."

The young Scotchman sat on his bench and sipped his Geneva

and water, and listened silently a while to the tirade which the company soon fell into against some who were at that time advocating a more unfettered trade intercourse with other nations; for your old Bristolians cherished a strong commercial jealousy. At length the future historian fell into the topic, but shocked the seniors present by taking a view totally different to theirs. "The jealousy of trade," said he, "is the bane of civilization, and it would be ungrateful, as well as impolitic in Englishmen, to cherish the blind feeling. Every improvement which we have for the last two centuries made has arisen from our imitation of foreigners, and we ought, so far, to esteem it happy that they had previously made advances in arts and ingenuity."

A few pooh-poohs from the company under the mulberry tree greeted this sentiment; but the young Scotchman continued in a calm tone which his master thought, and, indeed, audibly pronounced impertinence, still further to second his views, "Were our narrow and malignant politics,," said he, "to meet with success, we should reduce all our neighbouring nations to the same state of sloth and ignorance that prevails in Morocco and the coast of Barbary. But what would be the consequence? They would send us no commodities, they would take none from us; your domestic commerce itself would languish for want of emulation, example, and instruction, and you yourselves would soon fall into the same abject condition to which you had reduced them; I, therefore, make bold to say, gentlemen, with all respect for your greater experience and business habits, that not only as a man, but a British subject, I pray for the flourishing commerce of Germany, Spain, Italy, and even France itself."*

This was too much for his master, Billy Miller, who struck his pipe passionately on the bench before him. "I'll tell you what, Mr. Hume," said he, "when I consented, at the request of my correspondents in Edinburgh, to take a young man into my counting-house to teach him trade, I did not bargain to have a Jacobite and Pretender's man in disguise, turning over my ledger and preaching treason in taverns, so I tell you plainly you wont suit me or Bristol."

"I have already discovered that myself, Mr. Miller," replied David, as he walked across to the bar, and, with a bland smile to pretty Mistress Newth, who returned his courtesy with another smile, paid his reckoning, and, bowing to the company, walked out of the old Mulberry Tree-court, never again to enter it.†

A few mornings afterwards two persons took seats in the great leathern convenience or stage-coach that started from the White Lion, and occupied three days in the journey to London. The younger one was David Hume, and the other, who was some thirty years of age, was John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, who

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* The reader of Hume will perceive that I have not put strange sentiments into his mouth, as I have only thrown into a conversational form a part of his own Essay on the jealousy of trade.

† That a gallant courtesy was congenial to Hume, we have his own words for it. "I took a particular pleasure," said he, "in the company of modest women, and I had not reason to be displeased with the reception I met from them."

was returning from a preaching visit to Bristol, and was then going to the metropolis, with a view of making some arrangements for his intended voyage to Georgia.

Four years after the events above related, Dr. Joseph Butler, the profound and learned author of the "Analogy," was installed Bishop of Bristol. It is known that few were more hospitable or liberal than this great and good man. "Living," says one of his biographers, "a single life, and having no relations depending on him, he laid out all his income, and generously expended more in the twelve years he was Bishop of Bristol than he received from the whole See." One of the many ways in which he employed his money was in entertaining the head merchants and magnates; for he did not forget, while he was beneficence itself to the poor, that a bishop, who would set an example or exercise an influence for good amongst the rich, must not neglect his social duties amongst them also. The old Palace in the Lower Green was therefore maintained warmly and profusely, and many a gathering of civic guests took place in that ancient and comfortably wainscoted room, which was the refectory of the old Abbots, but which a Reform mob gave to the flames.

In the winter of 1742 Billy Miller was one of a party of local notables who had assembled in the Bishop's library, and were in momentary expectation of hearing his Lordship's butler announce dinner. On the library table lay a newly-printed book, which the Bishop, who was a keen and curious reader of the literary and political controversies of the day, was in the act of perusing when his guests were announced. Miller, who was in good humour for his dinner, and perhaps rendered a little hungry by the tantalising odours that reached him from the episcopal kitchen, mechanically turned over the pages of the work as if to allay his impatience, when, casting his eye casually upon the title, he exclaimed, "David Hume! My old clerk, by Jove." "What," said the Bishop, who was close at hand, "do you know the author, Mr. Miller?" "Know him, my Lord," repeated the merchant, "why he kept my letter-book for months, until I turned away the conceited puppy because he would correct my English: only think of his writing a book now!" and the Bristol merchant held up the volume, which was the first part of Hume's Essays, Moral and Political.

"Ah, Mr. Miller," said the good Bishop, with a smile, "I wish you had permitted the young Scotchman to go on mending your composition, in which case, perhaps, you would have kept at a more innocent occupation a man who, I fear, is destined to prove one of the most dangerous and ingenious opponents of revealed religion."

But Billy Miller's thoughts and wonder had taken a different direction, namely, that a clerk of *his*, a copier and writer of bills of lading, in his, William Miller's, counting-house, should ever come to write a book that a great bishop should read, was what puzzled and perplexed him; so that he went on muttering as he walked to the dining room, and with the savour of turtle soup floating about him, "To think of that fellow, whom I would not have thought of

trusting to sell a few tierces of sugar, coming to this—well, I *never*."—There is no guessing to what depths of reflection Miller would have sunk, but he was recalled to consciousness by the first spoonful of green fat that he put in his mouth.

Years rolled by, and William Miller troubled his head no more about David Hume : the Bristol merchant had other things to occupy him, for, in 1750, jointly with Mr. Isaac Elton and Mr. Harford Lloyd, he started in Broad Street, nearly opposite his old haunt, the Mulberry Tree Tavern and in the house now occupied by Messrs. Osborne and Ward, the first bank established in this city. Seven years afterwards the newly-appointed Dean of Bristol opened an account with them : this was no other than the great writer and tremendous polemic, William Warburton, and while Billy Miller sat in his bank parlour, like the king in the nursery rhyme counting out his money, the great Dr. Warburton sat in the study of the Deanery or Dove House, as it was then better known, answering in his bold and trenchant fashion, the treatises and discourses of Billy's whilome clerk, David Hume, who had once presumed to mend his English. And what is more wonderful, in a literary sense, this same David Hume contrived to make £20,000,—more wonderful, in a literary man, too, he contrived to keep it ; for the historian tells us, he realised by his literary labours and occupations a fortune that produced him £1,000 a-year. Billy Miller did not, however, live to hear this last and greatest wonder of all.

The Armourer and the Monk.

A LEGEND OF ST. AUGUSTINE'S.

[The reader is probably aware of the plot of this story, from some of the many dresses under which it has appeared. Longfellow adapted it to his tale of "Martin Franc." George Colman served it up in the "Knight and the Friar." It has had several French forms, and it is conjectured its real origin is to be found in "The Arabian Nights," or "The Story of the Little Hunchback." Be this as it may, I have attempted to make my use of it, and have followed Longfellow's version while giving it a local habitation and a name in and from Bristol. In one of the visitations by the Bishop of Worcester of the Monastery of St. Augustine's, we find the prelate directing "inquiry to be made" into the conduct of one of the Black Canons of our Abbey, John de Schaftesbury, "accused of incontinence with certain women unknown." A friend of mine has an old deed, in which Christmas Street is called "Knights' Smith Street," as he (I think rightly) conjectures, from its containing the booths and workshops of the Armourers.]

In the reign of Edward IV., when the discipline of the Monasteries, like the morality of the Court, was rather relaxed, there lived in Christmas Street (then called Knights' Smith Street, owing to its being chiefly occupied by armourers' shops,), one Giles Gaston, who had inherited a fair business and a decent fortune from his father. He was a hauberk-maker, and had a good name for the manufacture of that part of defensive armour, but was still better known as the possessor of one of the prettiest wives in Bristol. Amongst the many fair dames of the parish of St. John, there was none who had so dark an eye, so symmetrical yet rounded a form, or so rich a red struggling out through the hazel-brown of her cheek; so much so, that the little church of St. John's was, on Sunday, the resort of many a young citizen, who went there quite as much to see Mistress Margueretta as to hear mass. But though so much the object of admiration, there was not, within a circle of five miles round the Civic Cross of Bristol, a more correct or right principled dame than the hauberk-maker's wife.

But, if Giles was blessed with a *placens uxor*—a comely and prudent partner—he was not equally fortunate in the possession of much worldly wisdom himself. That is, he did what a great many people did then, have done since, and are doing now—lived beyond his means—outran the constable. He liked company, and while he entertained his friends in his pleasant parlour that went back and, with its oriel window, almost overhung the Frome, his workmen were not as attentive to hauberk-making in the front shop as they ought to have been; for it rarely happens that when a man ceases to attend to his own business, the people in his employ will be over-particular in their sphere. They find it out quickly enough, and there are none that so soon notice when the head of the house begins to neglect his business as those under his own roof, those in his own employ. Thus Giles's hauberks failed to give the satisfaction they did in old Gaston's time; they were not so well riveted or so well tempered, and the customers fell off. People did not come as

often to his shop as they once did, but there was no decrease in the number of his dinner company. The back parlour was as full of acquaintances as ever, for though his wares were by no means as strong as formerly, his entertainments were quite as unexceptionable. It would have been better for Master Gaston had his dinners been bad and his hauberks been good, for it is always easier to get company to eat your mutton than customers to buy your wares.

There is ever an end to this state of things, for we all know the result when expenses exceed our earnings. In fact, the hauberk-maker was in the end (to use a modern phrase) "sowed up." One fine morning all Gaston's neighbours were noticed, when they met each other, to shake their heads, and say they knew it must come to this—it could not last—"the man was living too fast"—nobody could be surprised at it—nobody—nobody—nobody. And they went away shaking their heads—the rascals. I say rascals; because if they knew it could not last, why were they drinking the man's sack and eating his capons all the time? Was there one of them—one of these solemn, sensible, prudent fellows, so very sagacious when misfortune began to overtake the man, that ever had the manliness, when he sent them an invitation to taste his sherry-sack, or cock-ale, or metheglin, or have a cut at his venison-pasties, his elvers or eel-cakes and marrow-puddings—I say was there one of the solemn head-shakers, who then had the manliness to write back a friendly note, or if they could not write—for that was an accomplishment not very common at the time even amongst gentlefolks—did any of them walk across to him, and take him aside, and say—"Excuse me, my dear fellow, but if I seem to do an impudent act I at least am honest, and wish you well: I am very much obliged to you for your kind invitation, and I like cock-ale and marrow-pudding, but I have a qualm of conscience, and don't like to share your hospitality, lest you may not be able to afford it. Excuse me. I know—indeed, I see by your face—I am taking a liberty; but I could not accept your kind invitation until I had said so much."

I don't say that a man, when he receives an invitation under these circumstances, is at all called upon to take this over-frank course. And had any of his acquaintances so acted towards Giles Gaston, the probability is that the latter—who was rather a hot-tempered, thoughtless fellow—would have kicked him out into the street for his candour. But not having done this, and having eaten his dinners, and drunk his sherry-sack, and enjoyed both, I say they had no right to shake their heads and say "they knew it," and to talk of his "going so fast," when they themselves helped him along.

When it was known that the foolish hauberk-maker could give no more dinners, no one asked him to have one, though it would not have been amiss, and he would not have said "no," since his appetite persisted in perversely continuing very good after his means had all gone. No; those who drank his health at his own table out of his own cock-ale and sherry-sack, and said he was "the soul of hospitality," and "had his heart in the right place," never asked him if he had a mouth, when he had little to fill it, but bolted out of his way when they met him.

These things made Gaston wiser than he was before; but Gaston's

wisdom came too late, and the only pleasure he had (if pleasure it could be called) was abusing himself for a fool and a donkey, that he should have wasted his substance on people who, the moment he was used up, cut from him through all by-ways and lanes. If he had his marrow-puddings, and his pasties, and his cock-ale and sherry-sack back again, he'd see them all shrunk up with starvation or dried up with thirst before he'd give them a bit or a sup: but he had not his sherry-sack or his cock-ale, or his marrow-puddings, and what was the use of talking? Perhaps if he had them again, he'd be as good-natured, as great a fool as ever, and fill his back parlour and pile up the table in the oriel window over the Frome with flagons of sherry-sack. It is my full belief he would have done so; but he did not get the opportunity of setting himself down an ass the second time.

However, there were two people who stood by him—one was his Margueretta—she stood by him like a trump; and though she did not invite the people to eat the venison pasties and marrow puddings, and drink cock ale; yet she did not blow up her poor fool of a husband in his adversity, and say, "This is all your doing, Mr. Gaston—it is your folly that has reduced me to this—I, that was used to a comfortable home—you spent it all, yes, you did, on those worthless pot companions of yours, who cut you now, and run away from me when they see me at mass as if I had the plague—Yes, I tell you it was all your fault." No; Margueretta did none of these things—she had too good a heart to throw water on a drowned rat; and, after all, if Giles was not a Solomon he was a good-tempered, good-natured fellow, and in his prosperity he never said an unkind word to Margueretta. He was not like some men—who are like the moon, a bright face to the world and a dark face at the other side. He did not play the fiddle to amuse people when he was out and hang it up when he got home. And this all married men may be sure of—if they are kind to their wives in prosperity their wives will never turn a black face on them in adversity.

Giles Gaston's other friend or acquaintance, who stuck by him, or rather stuck by his house, after the marrow puddings and the elvers and the cock ale were all gone, was Friar John de Schaftesbury, a Black Canon of St. Augustine's (now the Cathedral in College-green). Friar John came to Gaston's as usual, and Gaston thought him an honest fellow not to run away from the cupboard, like the rest of the worthless mice, because it was empty. Nay, Father John occasionally brought a bottle of Rhenish wine and a pasty under his black cassock, and cheered the Armourer's heart when most it wanted cheer. Giles never suspected the monk of sinister views, until one day his wife said to him that he had better not encourage the monk's visits. "Why not?" asked Giles; "He is the only decent fellow of all the men I feasted, and the only one who shows a substantial recollection of my cock-ale."

"I see," said Margueretta, "my simple-hearted husband, that you are still, in spite of all your lessons, unsuspicious. Then I must tell you it is not to see you, but me, Friar John comes. I care little for beauty and it ill becomes me to speak of it, but people will have it that I am handsome, and that wicked friar

would fain make me forget that which is a thousand times better than beauty—virtue."

"I see, I see," said the slow-witted hauberk-maker, now blazing out into a passion. "I will go at once to the Monastery, and break that fellow's shorn pate, though he were the Pope."

"Do nothing of the kind, Giles," said his wife, "but when he next comes show him the door, and tell him you will show him a cudgel should he again put his nose near it."

Hardly had these words passed Margueretta's lips when the oily-faced John of Schaftesbury made his appearance with his usual salutation of "Benedicite," and leering towards Margueretta as he spoke.

"Benedicite," shouted the hauberk maker, "I'll benedicite you, you hypocritical vagabond, coming to my house with your dishonourable proposals to an honest woman!" and he caught the priest by his broad shoulders, and dealing him a stout kick behind, sent him quickly into the street. They saw or heard nothing more of Friar John for a month—a hard month for poor Gaston and his wife, who could hardly get a meal a day. At the end of the month, however, Margueretta went to vespers at the Lady Chapel in the Abbey, and when the congregation had gone she lit her votive taper before the Virgin's shrine, and began to pray for better fortune. She was so absorbed in her devotions that she did not hear a footstep approaching, until some one touched her on the shoulder. She looked up, and saw over her the nasty, gross, voluptuous face of the Friar. "The Virgin has sent me, in answer to your prayers, daughter Margueretta," said he. "Rather, say the devil," answered Margueretta, who had plenty of nerve; "for you are more likely to run of his errands than our Lady's."

"You do me wrong, and your husband has done me wrong, but I forgive you both; and, as a proof of my forgiveness, here is something to help you in your adversity"—and he held out a purse; but Margueretta, knowing the Friar's gift was not an honest one, refused it. Still Father John persisted with his importunities, and Margueretta seemed to relent a little. "I will not take the money here before our Lady's shrine," she said. "If you mean me to have it, you can bring it to my house—you know where it is, Father John," she added, with a smile, which appeared to give him some encouragement.

"But——" said Father John, adding something in her ear.

"You can come at midnight," she said, "my husband will not be at home," and with that she quitted the Lady Chapel.

At midnight, Friar John, after sneaking for some time in the deep shadow of the cloisters to escape the observation of his brethren, crossed the Abbey garden, which occupied part of the site of the Lower Green, and let himself out through a wicket into the west suburb of the city, now Limekiln-lane. He soon afterwards knocked stealthily at Gaston's door in Christmas-street, first casting an eye to see that no loiterers watched him into the hauberk-maker's house. Margueretta undid the door, and the Friar entered. He was for at once saluting her with a kiss, but she waved him back, saying—"Not quite so fast, Father John; you forget your

promise." "I do not," exclaimed the Friar, throwing a leathern purse on the table; "there is my share of the contract."

"And here is mine," exclaimed some one behind him; and at the same time a cudgel descended with such force on the priest that he was felled to the ground. It was Gaston's hand dealt the blow, for his wife had told him of the friar's importunities, and they adopted this plan in concert, to teach him better manners for the future, while at the same time to profit by his purse.

But the plot went farther than they intended. Gaston merely purposed cudgelling the priest's shoulders, but the stick had descended on his bald crown, and when they went to pick him up they found, to their horror, that he was dead! Here was a scrape to get into. Hanged they must both be if the body were discovered there. What were they to do with it?

Margueretta was quickest in expedients. "Here," she said, taking a bunch of keys from the friar's girdle, "one of these is sure to unlock the Abbey postern, through which this unhappy man often came forth, prowling into the town by night: put him on your shoulder; nobody that can see you is now stirring; open the wicket, and once having placed the body within the monastery precincts, we are safe."

Gaston did not like the job. To walk through the streets at midnight with a dead monk on his back was not pleasant, but there was no choice. It must be done; so away he started with his load, desperation giving him strength to reach the Abbey wicket, which he opened, and taking the friar to a fish pond in the garden, which was supplied with water from the river, he propped the body up against a great willow, and leaving it there, he went back at a quick pace to his own home.

In the meantime, midnight prayers were going on in the monastery, and when they had finished, the Abbot, who had missed Friar John, exclaimed, "By the bones of St. Augustine, here is that incorrigible offender John of Schaftesbury again prowling about the town, and bringing scandal on the brotherhood; is there anybody who will go and see where the scamp is gone?"

Friar John might have had friends in the Abbey, but he certainly had enemies; one of the latter was Henry of the Granary—a Friar little better than himself, but who, nevertheless, had his reasons for hating John, and was known to hate him.

"I will go, father Abbot," said Henry of the Granary. "Let him go," said the Prior; "set a thief to catch a thief; Brother Henry is the man to find Brother John—*par nobile fratrum.*"

Henry of the Granary did not mind the sneer, but started off in pursuit of his scampish brother, crossing the garden on his way to the western wicket; but as he passed the fishpond, the moon shone out, and he thought he recognised the truant John, standing with his back against the willow.

"Hallo," called out Henry of the Granary, "wonders will never cease. So you have turned a St. Anthony, and are preaching to the fishes. But, come along; the Abbot has other fish for you to fry—come along—you are not drunk or asleep, are you?" he added, giving Friar John a push on the shoulder, when he did not answer.

It was a push given with a good will, for it sent the body toppling over into the fishpond.

"That will cool you," said Henry of the Granary, calling to his erring brother in the water; but when Friar John did not reappear on the surface, Henry grew cooler himself through fright. He stooped down and laid hold of the Friar's cassock and pulled him out. "By the bones of St. Augustine, he's dead," thought the Superintendent of the Granary, "and they'll say I murdered him, if they find him here. It is a bad business, but I must shift suspicion elsewhere. I must carry the body from this, and deposit it near one of his haunts. Let me see. He used to be always making after the hauberk-maker's pretty wife." No sooner said than done. Henry of the Granary was a stout fellow, so he tossed up the body of Friar John on his shoulders, and was not long in taking it to Christmas Street. He placed it up against Gaston's door, knocked loudly, and ran away.

Gaston and his wife were in too great fright to go to bed, and the knock at this hour, and after what had happened, made their hearts jump into their mouths. Margueretta, having most self-possession, went down and undid the door, and the moment it was opened, the monk's body fell back into her arms. She cried out in terror, and her husband was at her side. They looked like two ghosts at one another. "I placed him," said Giles, "by the Fishponds. It is only Satan himself could have brought him back."

"It must have been Satan," replied his wife; "but Satan must not betray us. Let us drop the body through the back window into the Froome."

"No, no," said Giles; "the neighbours would hear the splash, and Satan would keep the friar's body floating under our window, and we should be discovered."

"Then take him," said his partner, "to the Bridge, and put him in the Avon; or, better, into the pond of Baldwin's Mill. I have seen him about there, skulking after the miller's daughter; and her lover, Dighton the butcher, threatened to cut his crown for it. They will think he was after no good there, and tumbled in."

Giles liked this job no more than the other, so, muttering something about the machinations of Beelzebub, he once more took the body on his shoulders, and going round by the Fish Market, then on the site of St. Stephen's Street, he had got near the mill, which stood by St. Nicholas' Steps, when he heard someone coming along. He propped the body against the wall, and stood by its side, hoping the night-walker would pass, but the man, who also had a load on his shoulders, no sooner saw what he considered were two persons, than thinking himself watched, he dropped a heavy bag, and ran away.

"He surely was not going to drown another monk," said Gaston, venturing to look at the load the man had dropped. It was not a friar, but a dead hog in a sack—a pig in a poke—which the fellow, doubtless, was stealing, and fancying he was in danger, threw down and ran away.

Gaston's wits were quick enough this night. "Exchange is no robbery," thought he, so he promptly substituted the monk's body for the hog's carcase, and returned to his wife with the latter.

In the meantime the pig-stealer, not being pursued, and being joined by a couple of accomplices, returned, and found his bag in the same place. His companions twitted him on his nervousness, and all three proceeded to a low hostelry, which was little better than a receiving house for thieves, and the landlord of which found it profitable to keep open his doors all night for such customers. They put down the bag.

"What's the take to-night?" asked the landlord.

"A hog," answered the rogues. "Gasper here found it hanging in a booth in the shambles, ready for to-morrow's customers [the shambles stood then near the present Bridge-street], and he has only forestalled the market, that's all."

"Is it all!" exclaimed the landlord, starting back, for he had undone the mouth of the sack, and the first thing he saw was the monk's shorn head.

They all started in horror. "It is Beelzebub's doing," cried they; "for whatever is in the sack now, it was a hog that Gasper bagged."

"It is that vagabond monk, Friar John," said the tavern-keeper, "and I daresay Satan has turned him into a dead hog. I knew he would never come to a good end; but it won't do, fiend or not, to leave him here. We'd all get quartered for him; take him, and hang him up where the hog was, and be quick, or the townsfolk will be about."

So they twisted a string round the Friar's neck, and put him on the hook in the butcher's yard, and decamped.

Now the butcher happened to be Dighton, who had threatened the Friar for sneaking after his sweetheart, the miller's daughter, so when he came to his yard in the morning, he found his old enemy hanging from the meat hook. "Here's a pretty go," he exclaimed his first fright over. "The Abbot and all the world will say I hung this varlet—though it is clear he hung himself in despair for his wickedness. What shall I do?" His man, who had entered the yard with him, said, "Do; why tie him on your nag; let him gallop out of the yard, and then cry 'thief!' The people are about and will run after him, and leave the rest to chance."

The butcher was no wiseacre, so he fell in with the suggestion, stupid as it was. The monk was fastened on the mare, the door of the yard thrown open, and out bolted the frightened animal and his dead rider. "Thief! thief!" shouted the butcher and his man. "Thief! thief!" echoed the people through High-street, up which the animal galloped furiously. "The monk has stolen the butcher's horse!" resounded from all sides, the dogs barking and the folks bellowing after him. Wildly the horse tore through Corn-street, under St. Leonard's Gate, and through the Marsh, making for the river opposite Gib Taylor (Prince-street Bridge), and with one terrific bound, leapt with its ghastly rider over the bank into the tide, which was then ebbing fast, whirling horse and corpse in its current. A week after, both were seen by some sailors lying in the Swash, near the river's mouth, and for years the point where the horse plunged into the river was known as "The Monk's Leap." The whole affair was put down to the direct agency of Satan, and Gaston, who, alone knew the secret, was not such a fool as to let it out.

The Miniature.

1824.—Under the (St. Ewin's) church pavement, behind what was Mr. Davies's shop, was found the long hair only of a female; and about the middle of the remains of her coffin, wrapped in yellow silk, an oval miniature, in oil-colours on copper, of a gentleman, dressed in the costume of the early part of the last century, his flowing wig being of moderate dimensions, neckcloth rose-tied, and coat a light brown, without collar.—*Evans's History of Bristol.*

About the time that the first George ascended the British throne, there lived in Broad Street, Bristol, on the west side of that then picturesque thoroughfare, a Levantine and Mediterranean merchant, whom we shall call Golding. He had one son, an accomplished young man, but of retired and rather romantic habits. When he had attained the age of five-and-twenty, business called Charles Golding away to Genoa, where some complication of affairs with a correspondent of their house required personal superintendence. He went out in one of his father's ships, which after landing him at Genoa proceeded to Alexandria, on its return from which place it was to call for him again at the Italian port and continue its voyage to Bristol. This arrangement allowed Golding some months' stay in Italy, and having finished his business at Genoa sooner than he expected, he had ample leisure to make excursions into the interior. In his peregrinations he visited the lakes of Lombardy, and spent weeks in exploring the romantic recesses on the southern slopes of the Carnic Alps.

In the course of his journeyings he one evening reached a little hamlet on the north-eastern shore of the lake Garda. The hamlet consisted of a few vine-covered cottages overlooking the mirrored waters of the lake, across which the setting sun then reflected a great broad streak like a highway of light, gilding olive tree and pine grove with its rich tints, ere sinking behind the Lombardian Alps it proceeded on its course towards other regions. Charles Golding reined in his horse to enjoy the glorious sight, so soon to be succeeded by twilight; and it was not until the last blush of the sun had faded from the horizon that he bethought him of looking out for entertainment for self and steed. Nothing in the shape of an Inn could he see, and he was about to ride to one of the cottages to make enquiries, when he perceived a young girl approaching from a footpath that led from the lake. Her costume bespoke her no more than a peasant's daughter, yet there was a dignity in her carriage and in her beauty which might have belonged to the best born of the land. In her features she was a true daughter of Italy: the glossy, raven hair, the soft, dark eye, and the delicate olive tint were all there, and with them a sweetness and courtesy of expression, when she answered his

enquiry as to the possibility of his obtaining lodgings for the night, which produced that instant effect on the romantic nature of Charles Golding, which goes by the name of love at first sight.

In reply to his question, she said that the hamlet boasted no hostelry, but such shelter and entertainment as her father's cottage afforded were heartily at his service.

If it had been the ugliest and oldest woman in Lombardy from whom this invitation came, Golding was fain to accept it, as no other lodgings for the night offered : hospitality tendered by one so lovely was, therefore, not to be refused.

The traveller found the family of the fair Italian what her dress indicated. They were Lombardic peasants of the better order : the trellised cottage, surrounded with its fruit trees and almost reflected in the lake, was a pretty and picturesque object as might be seen, but then the frugal household—the supper of dried figs and grapes and coarse brown bread—showed that poverty, though covered with decency, abode with them. The little circle consisted of the father, mother, the girl Golding had met, a younger sister, and two sons, boys of twelve and fourteen years of age. When the horse he rode had been housed for the night in a cattle shed, and Golding joined the family meal, the father, John Vassi, a fine specimen of the peasant of Northern Italy, said a short but impressive grace, which, with other indications, convinced Golding that he was in one of the few Protestant hamlets which, in this retired Alpine district, continued to hold its faith through centuries of persecution. The supper ended, they retired to rest, Dora, the eldest girl, having made up for the young Englishman a bed of dried fern, which, with a woollen coverlid, served him as comfortably as a couch of down; for delicious, indeed, were the dreams which visited his slumbers, and the soft eyes and the sweet smile of Dora made a part of every vision.

He was up with the lark, but not to resume his journey. The first person he met, on issuing from the cottage, was Dora returning with a jar of water from the lake, and the morning's reality more than confirmed the impression of the previous evening. He could not depart that day : he found an excuse for delay in the beauties of the lake, and returned at night to claim again the hospitalities of the peasant's cottage.

The tale is partly told already. No wonder that the beauty of Dora Vassi, and, what was more, her sweetness and natural courtesy, made an indelible impression on the heart of the romantic Golding. To live without her he felt was impossible, and to take home as a wife, to the house of proud parents, the daughter of an Italian peasant would, he knew, be to break their hearts, and have himself, perhaps, and his bride, thrust forth upon the world. For his own part, too, he did not relish the notion of being sneered at by his friends and neighbours at home for a *mésalliance*. The folks in Bristol were then pretty much what they are now; and Charles Golding himself was not without a large share of pride, and liked to hold up his head as high as his neighbours, which, he feared, he would not be able to do, if it were known that his wife's father was only a poor vine-dresser and goatherd on the banks of the

Garda, though Dora, with her grace, her sweetness, and self-respect, might pass for the daughter of one of the palace-lodged merchant-princes of Venice.

Now, this very thought suggested an escape from his difficulty. Why not pass her off as such? Why not introduce her to his father and mother as one more than his equal? Who, at that distance, was to find out it was otherwise, could he only persuade the object of his love to second his plan? It was now more than a week since the evening he first rode into the hamlet; and Dora and he were in a light boat on the lake, when he told her all his love and all his schemes. His love the girl readily returned; but to his suggestions that she should permit him to pass her off as the daughter of an Italian aristocrat, she was not as easily induced to consent. Her conscience revolted at being a party to deceive Golding's parents, and her pride forbade her to deny her own. But her lover urged it would be only for a time. His father and mother were old, and might not live to render secresy long necessary, or she might and probably would so win upon them, that they would be glad to receive her and love her though her birth were still more obscure. Her family should not want for funds; and though at present it was necessary that their destination should be unknown to her parents, the latter should from time to time hear from and of her, and might, at no distant day, join them in free England and participate in their daughter's good fortune.

At length Golding so won upon her by his arguments—her heart being already his—that she allowed him to consult her father and mother, and if they consented to part with her on these terms, she would, for their sakes and his sake, commit her being and happiness to the keeping of the Englishman who had so strangely found his way to her hamlet home.

Dora's father and mother did not feel to the same extent the scruples of their daughter. They could not understand how it was desirable that Golding's proud English parents at home should be gained over before the whole truth was made known to them; though they at first could not see why they themselves were to be kept in ignorance of the exact destination of their child. This objection, too, was overruled by Golding, who suggested that a secret in the keeping of a whole family might be no secret at all, and that the real state of matters might thus, through some third party, become known to his parents before it was desirable.

Chapter II.

Golding's father and mother were prepared for the reception of his beautiful Italian bride by letters, which he dispatched home ere the ship returning from Alexandria called at Genoa to carry him and Dora to England. The story which he told in his communication was in accordance with his own device. His bride, he said, was the daughter of an Italian Count, and, unable to gain her father's consent, she had fled with him and from her home. The natural dignity and beauty of Dora, when she arrived with her

husband in Bristol, were well calculated to support his narrative. The old people never doubted it, and received with open arms the Count's daughter, though they would, it is to be feared, have refused admittance to her had she come as the child of the poor vine-dresser of the lake of Garda. Their neighbours were equally charmed with the lovely foreigner, and saw the "unmistakeable signs of noble birth" in everything she did and said, and of course estimated her society according.

But in all this success and gaiety poor Dora after a while—though she loved her husband as tenderly as ever—began to pine for her Italian home. Amidst the wealthy display of the rich English city, back to her came the reminiscences of the loved trellised cottage overlooking the waters of the Garda; and then the thought of those loved ones beneath its roof—the mother who had nursed her, the manly father—his cheek tanned by sun and labour—the little sister that toiled by her side, and the young nut-brown brothers, whose hearts nearly broke as they parted from her; while her conscience smote her to think that she was then denying them, and that she was living amidst so much luxury while penury and toil were their portion. To these bitter memories were added the circumstance that she had not yet heard from them: her husband had not informed them of her destination, and had forbidden her to write, lest some "unpleasant revelation" should be made. More than once she asked him for tidings of her far off Italian home, and to remove from her his prohibition against writing, but he answered in a manner that showed her importunity annoyed him. Repelled from sympathy, she had recourse to grief in secret: and not in secret only, for sometimes in company her feelings would come upon her with a rush that overbore all restraint; and when she sang one of her little Italian songs to her lute, the melody would bring back the thoughts of home and kindred, and tears would fall upon her hands and instrument, so that some people whispered she was unhappy, and that the high-bred "Italian Countess," in the society of wealthy burghers, "pined for the splendid marble halls of her father's palace." Poor Dora, how happy would she have been if she and her husband were only vinedressers on the pleasant banks of the Garda.

Thus three years passed, at the end of which Golding's parents died, and then his wife sought the fulfilment of his promise that her family and she should be united. But though Charles Golding's love for his Italian wife was after a fashion as intense as ever, his feelings shrank from any step which might endanger his respectability. He plainly told his wife she must be content to be severed for ever from her family, though he would take care that the means of greater comfort were procured for them. No wonder that conduct like this led to some little estrangement between them. Dora was constantly closeting herself, refusing society, and more than ever suffering from her home sickness. Everything reminded her of the loved peasant cottage on the Garda: when the chimes of the Bristol churches were heard on a summer Sunday morning, they recalled to mind the time when she listened to the echoes of the bells as they were borne on the lake from the

nearest village church, and she could not take a walk in the neighbourhood without memories of her loved Lombardy being awakened.

Her eye was losing its lustre and her cheek growing wan under this struggle, and her husband, who could not understand how, amid all that wealth could procure, she pined after a rough peasant's lot, began to put down her grief to other causes. The morbid thought got possession of him that she only accepted him because he was wealthy, and that she might have formed some other affection ere chance led him to her native hills. To this alone he thought was attributable her estrangement: he even charged her with it, and in the bitterness of her grief she took little trouble to disabuse him of the impression, though in reality he now, as always, was the sole possessor of her heart; and yet, perhaps, she imagined this new fancy of his might lead to some change for the better, and that in order to secure her love he would comply with her wishes. Thus she unconsciously fed the passion which in secret preyed upon him, and while both grew more estranged, he also grew daily more and more jealous of some unknown and imaginary rival.

Curious enough, while such were the causes of Golding's and his wife's unhappiness, their acquaintances had put down the alteration in their manner to each other, not to Golding's pride but to Dora's, and to her distaste for a mode of life inferior to that in which she had been brought up. Thus matters stood when one day, as she was nursing in secret as usual her home-sickness, and wondering how the world went with those she loved far off in Lombardy, her ears caught the strain of a little melody she had never heard but in her own far off hamlet. She listened; the words were in Italian, and familiar to her; the accompaniment was played on an instrument such as the Lombardic peasants were accustomed to sing to. She ran to the casement, and opening it, beheld in the street a young Italian, about seventeen years of age, with black hair, bright eyes, and handsome nut-brown features. What makes the poor, fair exile's sight swim, and her knees to totter? Many an Italian boy had sung and played in front of the old White Lion opposite, without producing any such effect upon her, but with a sister's instinct and a sister's eye she had discovered in the street minstrel, who all unconsciously sang his Lombardic melody in front of the house of his richly married sister, her brother Alberto, he whose arms could with difficulty be disentangled from her neck as he bade her adieu four years ago, ere she entered the carriage and was carried off by her English husband. All her pent up affection burst forth, and she stopped not to consider if her husband would consent to recognise a brother-in-law in the young Italian vagrant, and the youth might go away while she prayed and entreated permission to see him. No time was to be lost. She called one of the servants, and told him to send up the young singer, as she wished to hear his melody. It was only natural that his Italian mistress should wish to hear Italian music, so the man executed his errand, and the young minstrel was introduced into the room, doffing his cap with a winning smile, and the usual "Miladi" salutation. Dora's back

was to the light, and the youth did not recognise her. As she turned round, however, and addressed him in Italian, her own voice trembling with emotion as the well-known tones of her brother's thrilled upon her ear, the youth gave a cry of joyful recognition, and crying "*O, sorella mia*," rushed forward. With that heartfelt exclamation all cold considerations of caution vanished, and Dora flung herself into her Alberto's arms: the beautiful wife of the proud Bristol merchant lay sobbing in the embrace of the young street musician.

In this ecstatic meeting they heard not, they heeded not, footsteps on the staircase. Dora noticed not, saw not her husband's entrance, and the black expression of jealousy that passed across his features, as with a sudden and violent effort he separated the young man from the embrace of his sister, and in a paroxysm of rage flung him forth from the room, and ere he could recover himself, Alberto fell headlong down the stairs. With a loud cry of agony Dora was quickly by the side of her insensible brother, and ere another minute passed, Golding himself had learnt that he who was all but lifeless was no rival but his wife's mother's son, come to seek his loved and unheard-of sister in a far land, and maintaining himself, during his affectionate search, by his voice and his instrument. To do him justice, no one could have been more shocked at the sad results of his almost involuntary act than was Golding. He lifted the body of the Italian youth, bore him up stairs and placed him on a couch, but the bright eye was fast getting glazed, and the colour fleeting from the brown cheek. In the fall the boy had received a fatal injury where the spine meets the brain, and in a few minutes more life had departed, though Dora still hung over him kissing and bathing his handsome features with her tears, until she suddenly became conscious of the terrible truth, that not a living but a lifeless body was in her arms. Then she rose, and all the meek endurance of four years had departed from her nature; she faced round on her husband, fire flashing from her eyes. "Proud, cruel, heartless man!" she cried, "murderer of my brother, from this moment I tear you from my heart as I do this picture from my neck," and with that she broke the chain of a miniature of Golding, that until then had hung round her neck, threw it from her, and once more she flung herself on the body of Alberto.

A deep groan that seemed to rend his heart burst from Golding, and with that agonised expression of remorse and grief departed all that was bad in his nature, pride and jealousy which had caused the death of a fellow being. "I have sinned," said he, "I am punished—the curse of Cain is upon me;" and like another Cain he went forth to wander on the earth.

Fortunately there were none of the servants present when the fatal accident occurred, and for an accident only it passed. The day after, however, when the first paroxysm of Dora's grief had somewhat softened, she received a letter from Golding, the bitter heart-broken remorse and agony of which could not fail to touch even one who had suffered so much by his violence. He said he would that day leave for Italy, and when he brought back

to England her parents, her sister, and her surviving brother, and acknowledged them in the face of the world and made them the sharers of all he had, that then and not till then he would ask for her forgiveness. If anything in the meantime happened to him and he was unable to carry out his purpose, the utmost he could ask her was that if she thought he might be pardoned, she would again place the miniature around her neck, however unworthy the original. He also enclosed a few words, making her the sole heiress of his property in case of death.

Chapter III.

Nearly a year passed and nothing was heard of Golding; and the longer his absence, the more Dora's old love for him returned. She now found excuses for much that she before blamed, and when at length intelligence reached Bristol that the ship in which he sailed had been seized by Algerine pirates who then infested the Mediterranean, and every soul on board was put to death, she turned upon herself all the accusations she once levelled at him, and upbraided herself with being his murderer, having driven him forth with a cruel speech, every word of which seemed traced with a barbed arrow of self accusation indelibly on her memory. These accumulated struggles proved too much for poor Dora. Days of anguish were followed by fever and delirium, which rendered it necessary that the long, black, silky tresses, so often admired, should be cut from her head. But it was all to no purpose; she sank rapidly, and a short time before she expired consciousness returned for a few minutes, when she whispered the request that the miniature which she wore round her neck should be buried with her. Her wish was complied with, and ere they closed the coffin the physician who attended her placed her long hair in it also, saying it had added to her loveliness in life, and in death it must not be divided from her.

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Twelve years more had flown by, and the story of the fair Italian was almost forgotten by her neighbours round the High Cross, when one evening the sexton of St. Ewen's was accosted by a swarthy stranger, as he was locking the church door. He asked to be allowed to enter, and then begged the sexton to point him out the tomb where the ashes of the Italian lady lay. The sexton did so, and in his communicativeness pointed out another grave close by; "It was that," he said, "of an Italian boy, who had met with his death in a strange manner in her house." "It was an odd story," he said, "the poor lady died mad, and raved about her husband and this boy, whom she called her brother." "And the husband?" asked the stranger in a husky voice, "What became of him?"

"They said he was killed by pirates," answered the man, "on his way to Italy, but if I might make bold to guess," he continued, looking the stranger full in the face, "Mr. Charles Golding now stands before me."

It was Golding, who had escaped from an Algerine prison, for

the pirates had retained him (for the hope of ransom); his hair had grown grey, and his features dark and wan. He confessed his identity, and more than that he made a confidant of the sexton, and that night, when all around were asleep, he had the grave opened, and though the body of Dora had mouldered away, when he saw the miniature he raised a cry of joy, and fell sobbing on the pavement. Golding's remaining strength only appeared to serve him to reach the grave of his wife. From the old church he departed but to take to his bed, and never left it until his body, too, was borne to the church of St. Ewen, and deposited in the tomb that enclosed the ashes of his wife, and now contained all that remained of the original, as well as the little oval MINIATURE which supplies a name for my story.

The Bristol Alderman and his Step-Daughter.

[John Whitson, the founder of the Red Maids' Hospital, who died in 1629, owing to injuries received by a fall from his horse while riding near his country house at Ashton, in Wiltshire, disinherited his step-daughter, Sarah Hynde, the child of his second wife, for marrying against his wish, alleging as his reason for so doing that she refused to be ruled by him in the matter of her marriage. Whitson's residence in Bristol was in Nicholas Street, late the Queen-Bess public-house, but now forming part of the Athenæum Chambers.]

Alderman Whitson and his neighbour Colton sat after dinner in front of the great fire-place in the Alderman's dining-room in his house in Nicholas Street, the same room and great carved chimney-piece which, until recent years, had so long been lions of our local domestic architecture. Both men had risen to be magnates from very humble origin, both loved to talk of their early struggles, and both, while affecting to take pride in their humble birth, were very lofty and imperious old gentlemen in their way. The subject of their evening's conversation was a proposed alliance between Colton's son and the Alderman's pretty step-daughter, Sarah Hynde. Of course Whitson never asked the young girl whether she would like Master Colton, junior, whose chief attraction consisted in a certain derivative capacity for making money which belonged to the family, whose talent for getting was only equalled by their genius for keeping what they got. Sarah herself, as she tripped lightly into the room with a fresh flask of Rhenish for this long-headed old pair, never dreamt that they were bargaining her away as if she were a bag of wool or any other article of merchandize, and least of all did her step-father fancy that she would be imprudent enough to dispute his will and pleasure. Presently, however, a tap is heard at the door, and a young man, one of Whitson's clerks with some letters from the counting-house, enters. He stands, cap in hand, while the Alderman peruses the papers, and is rewarded by his patron with a glass of wine; and though he is a frank, pleasant, intelligent-looking young fellow, and a steady clever youth (as his master pronounces him after he leaves the apartment), the Alderman allows him to drink it standing; for though originally a poor boy himself, who had come across the Severn to seek his fortune in Bristol, he felt of course it would derogate from his dignity to offer the youth a seat. But never mind—Richard Holdworthy (for such was the young man's name) is solaced for the slight (if slight there be) as he leaves the room and meets outside Mistress Sarah Hynde, from whom he receives a smiling look and a pleasant word.

Ah! go on, old gentlemen, and bargain over your older wine. If you could only see through the great oak door, how that blooming girl met the frank young clerk on the lobby after he left you, you would be convinced that there must be even more than two to a

bargain. Mistress Hynde had a good pair of blue eyes, and when she called at the counting-house for her step-father she did not shut them when the good-looking young clerk, by some stealthy glances over his account book, became aware that if he had not a very faint heart he might win a fair lady Where there is a will there is a way; and when Richard Holdworthy went upstairs after dinner with the letters, as was his wont, his frequent meetings with Mistress Sarah by the great dining-room door, were not mere meetings of chance and accident, any more than were the brief interviews which took place between the young people before Richard tapped at the oak door, and the full authoritative voice of the old Alderman was heard to say "Come in."

However, the Alderman was soon to be enlightened. As a mere matter of form he told Mistress Sarah one morning that she was to be married, and she, as a matter of natural curiosity, asked her step-father to whom: and when informed that it was to John Colton (who, as he sat opposite to her in St. Nicholas Church, was the object of her silent, but special dislike), she answered in a manner that marvellously astonished the Alderman, that "She could not dream of marrying a mere money grubber."

When an old man, who is very wealthy and thinks himself very wise, hears his pleasure for the first time disputed, and that by a little baggage of a girl, it is surprising what a novel but unpleasant sensation he experiences. Old Whitson was an oracle in his way, and the deference paid him out of doors was a bad preparation for his patiently receiving opposition within. He was preremptory and the girl was positive, and, in the candour of the moment, not only told him whom she would not have, but whom she *would have*, and that John Colton she abhorred, and Richard Holdworthy she loved.

"What! a penniless hireling in my counting-house?" exclaimed Whitson; and Sarah, in her impetuosity, reminded her step-papa that he himself had been a poor boy, and that Richard Holdworthy could, by her dear father's assistance, rise as he had done.

"By my assistance!" cried the Alderman, —— he could say no more, he was in such a sublime state of indignation, but stalked down to the counting-house, and calling Holdworthy into his private room closed the door, and looked the young culprit in the face. "So you," said he, "have had the assurance to make love to my step-daughter?"

Holdworthy frankly admitted that he "could not help it." How could he? People can no more help falling in love than they can help falling sick. He hoped the Alderman would forgive them both, and permit them to be happy.

This did not at all please the magnate. "I suppose," said he, indignantly, "you imagine I am going to stand godfather to a pretty romance, join your hands, bid you be happy, and ask you to walk in and make yourselves comfortable with my hard-earned fortune; be an obedient old fellow, sit in the chimney-corner, and see you bill and coo. What do you think I am going to do with my money?"

Holdworthy said he would not presume to guess, "but as the

alderman had no children of his own, and could not take it with him to another world, he did not think he could make a better use of a portion of it than by helping a couple of young people, who would ever be grateful and try to be industrious."

Whitson, like all people who have not much reason on their side, would not condescend to argue the question, but immediately had recourse to a personal appeal. "Go," said he; "see Mistress Hynde, and dissuade her out of a foolish notion which you have craftily put into her head, and if in half an hour you do not return to me with her repentant promise to marry John Colton, you shall pack for ever out of my counting-house, and she shall have no place either in my will or my affection."

Holdworthy bowed, took his cap and departed, while the Alderman proceeded, in a somewhat perturbed state of mind, to turn over his letters. Foolish Alderman Whitson, to send the fox with a message to the poultry-yard! "Sarah," said Holdworthy; "the Alderman is in a rage, and has sent me to request you to make me the bearer of your promise to wed John Colton, but I think I could suggest a much better course."

What that course was the sequel showed; for when an hour expired and Holdworthy had not returned, the Alderman went to see for himself, and called Sarah Hynde from the top of the house to the bottom, but no Sarah Hynde was to be heard or seen. Then Whitson went to his strong chest and took out his will, and a cloud of dark indignation overshadowed his brow, as he began erasing her name for the handsome dowry he had left her therein. "The white plate which was her mother's," and "the damask, which was marked with the letter 'M,'" and "the diamond ring, and the two small chains of gold, and the six damask napkins," and "the house in Corn Street"—all, all were scratched out.*

Oh! that expression in the Alderman's eyes, and those compressed lips, as he put back the altered will into the strong box, boded no good to the runaway pair. For run away they did, and the citizens had the story of the truant lovers from Nicholas Gate to the Gaunts, before the evening had set in; but the stern and upright Alderman was next morning at the Tolzey as usual, and no one would imagine from his countenance, as no one had ventured to question him, what had taken place.

Mistress Sarah and her young husband shortly returned, and there was a story about her having gone one winter's night to the great house in Nicholas Street, and stolen upstairs, and thrown herself at her step-father's feet as he sat silent and solitary by his great carved chimney-piece, and asked his forgiveness and his help in their struggle to make way in the world; and that the old Alderman continued relentless, and Sarah left the great house once more hopeless to meet her husband, who awaited her outside in the street.

But they had better help than the Alderman. Heaven favoured

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* This is nearly an exact copy of what Whitson had left Sarah Hynde in his first will. and afterwards revoked. The hardship of the case was that he actually disinherited her of her mother's own property.

their honest young efforts to struggle with the world, and Holdworthy continued to advance in prosperity and rise in the city, while Whitson spent most of a contemplative half-moody old age at his country house at Rood Ashton. At length, after some years had passed, and Holdworthy had become a citizen of substance, he and his wife, when they no longer wanted help, resolved in the early spring of 1629 to visit the Alderman at his country seat and entreat a reconciliation, which they had reason to suppose would not be ungrateful to him. It was afternoon as they approached the snug mansion, and they were speculating on their probable reception when a riderless horse attracted their attention, and presently, lying by the road side, the old Alderman himself. They flew to his assistance, but life was fast ebbing. He seemed, however, to recognise them, and muttered some words, which they fondly fancied were "Forgive and be forgiven."

Every one has heard of the grand funeral which the founder of the Red Maids' Hospital had. He was buried on the 9th of March in the crypt of St. Nicholas church, where, as well as in the west entrance, his monument may yet be seen, and was seen last November 20, when the Red Maids and City School Boys attended divine service on the Alderman's anniversary. All the Corporation, in mourning gloves, attended the grand obsequies. The trained bands, too (their fifes and drums playing solemn tunes), the boys of Queen Elizabeth's Hospital, and seventy-five old men in black gowns accompanied the procession, while as the funeral train passed along the Quay minute guns were fired. But amongst all that crowd there was not one who more sincerely mourned than Richard Holdworthy, who had stolen away that stern old Alderman's step-daughter.

In 1634-5, as you will find by passing your finger down the list of Mayors, Holdworthy was Chief Magistrate of Bristol; the same year that the Red Maids' Hospital—to endow which Whitson had disinherited Sarah Hynde—was opened with twelve girls. The first Sunday they went publicly to church, the Mayoress, scarlet-gowned like themselves, walked at their head, calling them her twelve young sisters for whom she had been disinherited; and the citizens looked on and blessed the good woman, who as she ever after took an interest in that institution, always admitted that her father, in providing for those poor children, had made a better use of his money than in enriching a disobedient daughter who had been more prosperous than she deserved to be.

Edward Colston's Apocryphal Love Story.

[For the truth of the following (it will be admitted very extraordinary) passage in the life of Colston, the reader must take my own word, as I am not prepared at present to produce the important and lately discovered manuscripts from which it is taken, I quite expect to see some irreverent and unbelieving antiquarian throw a doubt on the whole, and perhaps cite authorities to prove that my narrative is a fiction. Now with regard to this, all I have to say is with poor Power, in *His Last Legs*, "D—— all your authorities" I don't care a fig for them; there's Barrett has written a history on the strength of the Rowley manuscripts, and Dumas has constructed a large book on celebrated criminals from his own imagination. At the proper time—namely Colston's Day—I mean to produce my documents, as the present paper was written for the purpose of being perused at the next Dolphin dinner, in conformity with the usual custom of reading "something connected" with the Philanthropist on that charity festive occasion.]

Barrett says Colston was "at years of maturity sent as a factor to Spain;" but Barrett seems ignorant of the real cause of Colston's departure, which took place at an earlier age than one might be disposed to infer from this. It will doubtless appear to my readers a new passage in the life of the Philanthropist, when informed that he had been a lover and was crossed in love. The cause of Colston's continued celibacy is put down to his philanthropy; but his saying when urged to marry, that every "widow was his wife, and her distressed orphans his children," was only the amiable apology under which he concealed the painful secret and resolution of his life.

The family of Colston were ever celebrated for their high Church and royalist principles; and in his youth, when party spirit ran high, and the terrors and dissensions of the Republican period with all its persecutions were still fresh in the recollection of men, a difference on the important points of politics and religion was deemed an insuperable barrier to anything like intimacy between two families. Young Colston inherited the principles of his ancestors. To serve God and honour the King was the motto on which he acted; and if he was too charitable to cherish hatred for those persons in the city who were known as inveterate Puritans and Republicans, he was taught from an early age to regard them with distant and distrustful feelings. How one seemingly so fortified against such casualties could be touched with love—his first and last love—for the daughter of a notoriously disaffected house therefore appears strange. But this was the fact. The name of Vickeris for nearly half a century had been associated with all the discontent, fanaticism, intrigues, and plots of the city. Not only had the male members of the family been violent partizans, but in the time of the Parliamentary struggles the female branches had, if possible, been still more active; Mrs. Vickeris, in the time of Charles I., having been the principal means of letting the Repub-

lican army into the city. They could boast of one merit, however, in their principles—they were consistent. The reign of Queen Anne found them at least as malignant in feeling as they were under the first of the Stuarts. But there are at times as handsome faces amongst malignants as amongst the most loyal. We can't keep all the beauty on our side of the question, though one thinks a blooming cheek and a bright eye should never belong but to loyalty. Ann Vickeris had both, and a certain peculiar expression which gave softness and sweetness of character to features naturally so well favoured. How Colston became first acquainted with the fair Republican I cannot say. There are a hundred opportunities, when youth and beauty are attractive, for both to meet without any one having need to trouble their head with a hundred conjectures. And meet they did, and that often, but never at the houses of one or the other: the party feelings of either family were too strong for that — a great gulf of religion and politics divided them. Many of the citizens noticed the growing intimacy, and gravely predicted a union between the representative of the rich royalist, Colston, and the fair daughter of the republican, Vickeris: yet, though there were many to gossip about this little love affair, neither family—as those most interested are often the last to be informed in such matters—knew anything about it; for both the lovers were doubtless conscious of the difficulty which interposed between them in this respect, and avoided disclosing the secret for the present to their friends, unknown to whom they met.

There are always good-natured persons, however, ready to assist people to early and authentic information, and one afternoon as old Vickeris was bustling through College Green, he was stopped by an inveterate gossip, a person who, having nothing better to employ his time, spent most of it amongst the favourite and shady promenades of the Green. There are always such men in every age and in every place, from the crowded city to the country town—they live upon rumour; tattling is a luxury essential to them, and they'd as soon almost be without their breakfast as a fresh report for the day. You meet them lounging in public rooms, lolling against lamp-posts, and looking out for people to lay hold of by the button-hole. Such a local nuisance was the person who accosted old Vickeris, and congratulated him on the approaching marriage of his daughter. Vickeris was surprised, and being of gruff manners, inquired whether his informant was mad or dreaming; his daughter was not going to be married to his knowledge. "Then she's going to be married without it," replied the gossip; "and I am glad you are about to infuse some liberal blood into old Colston's family; I hope she'll convert the red hot royalist as well as his son."

"Young Colston—my daughter," muttered the old Puritan, "they don't even know one another."

"Don't they?" said the gossip; "When you have been poking over your ledger, and falling asleep over invoices of indigo, they have been cooing like turtle doves under these green trees. Bless your soul, why it was talked of last night in the Nag's Head, and they said he meant to run away with her—indeed I saw myself

rather a suspicious looking coach and four this morning—are you quite sure your daughter is at home?"

Old Vickeris merely muttered "An old fool!" and making no further reply, turned on his heel somewhat perturbed, looking, as the gossip afterwards remarked in the Nag's Head—when retailing the conversation to two parties, by whom it was transmitted to posterity—"as if he was just being obliged to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles."

What could make old Vickeris seem so uncomfortable might be a matter of surprise to many, for "in all that makes a match desirable" (to use the parlance of the world) young Edward Colston was everything a man could desire for his daughter (with the exception, the single exception of party). But this, as subsequent events showed, was *the* objection with Vickeris. There was an old political feud between the families, and there had further been a personal quarrel between him and the elder Colston, who was still living, and whom he cordially hated. His feeling in this respect, too, might have been fortified by the secret conviction that to Edward's father the alliance would be still more distasteful than even to himself.

All unconscious of the impending cloud, poor Mistress Ann was arraying herself for an afternoon walk, in which it is possible she would not have been unaccompanied, when her father knocked at the door. "Come in," said Ann, and old Vickeris entered. What passed between father and daughter, the historian has no means of ascertaining. Ann, however, did not go out to walk that evening, and when she left her dressing-room her eyes were red: but a faithful historian, unless cognizant of the fact, should not assume from this that she had been weeping.

"Where can that old round-head be going in such a hurry?" inquired two citizens almost in the same breath of each other, as they stood by their door in High Street, and saw old Vickeris pass in a kind of trotting gait, which he always adopted when bound upon urgent business or mischief. "Something is in the wind," you may rest assured, said the elder partner: "Puritanism looking up, or indigo down." They were wags, were these citizens, well-to-do-in the world? They loved the Church, honoured the King, and kept good wares, and when the hurry of the day was over, their enjoyment was to stand at their own shop door, each with his shoulder against a post, and crack jokes with those who passed; and there was something so good-humoured in their faces, so hearty in their laugh, that you might see the neighbouring tradesmen one after the other leave their own thresholds, and join in the merriment, or as they expressed it themselves, "speak with them in the gate." Old Vickeris, however, did not relax a muscle as he passed this merry group, whose evening's entertainments were so well-known: his sour visage seemed to grow, if possible, more ascetic.

The elder Colston, dinner over, was seated with his son before a bottle of canary in the principal summer apartment of his house in the Temple (as the precincts of Temple parish were then familiarly called). The lattice which was open, and surrounded with clusters

of roses peeping in as it were inquisitively on the two, looked out on a small though neat and trim garden, in the centre of which was a fountain surmounted by two Dolphins (the family device), discharging jets of water from their mouths. "Come, Edward," said the father, "fill your glass; you seem for the last half-hour as though you were anxious to rid me of your company—one would fancy you were in love, and had to meet your mistress." Had not the attention of the elder Colston been withdrawn at that moment by the entrance of a servant, he might have noticed that his son reddened.

"Master Vickeris wishes to see you, sir," said the servant. The young Colston again changed colour. "Master Vickeris!" repeated his father, with surprise, not having spoken to the old republican for years. "What can he want with me? Tell him to walk up." The servant left the room with the message, but returned to say that Master Vickeris wished to see him in private.

The elder Colston, though a stern unbending man, was a gentleman in mind and bearing. Vickeris, however, partook largely of the characteristics of his party. Morose but naturally awkward, he concealed his awkwardness under a seeming of blunt independence. Colston led the way into his study, a small wainscoted apartment. On entering Vickeris said without further preface, "I believe, Mr. Colston, you entertain no very friendly regard for me?"

Surprised at this sudden address, the other hesitated before attempting to answer so invidious a question. "Come," said Vickeris, seeing his hesitation, "I suppose that offspring of insincerity called politeness prevents you replying to a downright question with a downright answer: but I, you know, am no great lover of Kings, and, therefore, no adept in these courtly arts: to free your candour then from any restraint allow me to lead the way by saying I am no friend of you or yours. We have always been political enemies, our parties are opposite as the poles, and I shall and always did consider my political enemy as my personal foe."

"Then," said Colston, with some composure, "since you have been so frank as to volunteer this confession, I am free to confess there is no love lost between us."

"So far then we understand each other," said Vickeris. "Pray how would you like to have this family feud patched up with a marriage?"

"With a marriage!" repeated Colston, with astonishment.

"Yes," said Vickeris; "how would you like a republican branch grafted on your royal oak?"

"Your language is a riddle to me."

"Then it shall be no longer," replied Vickeris: "in fact and in short your son and my daughter are in love, and were progressing towards matrimony when I discovered the secret."

The elder Colston, though not a coarse man like Vickeris, was a proud man and a stern man. Of higher rank and more ancient family than Vickeris, he would have regarded in any case such a match as below his son's position and deserts; but the notorious

disaffection of the family of Vickeris was an insurmountable obstacle in his eyes even to a friendly intercourse, to say nothing of an alliance. He was silent for a moment with chagrin and surprise.

Vickeris noticed it. "I see," said he, "you are no more disposed to fuse the two bloods than I am, and I would keep the republican pure; no daughter of mine shall steal an unwelcome guest into any house, least of all in a royalist's. It is for this, therefore, that I have called—to combine with you in this one matter, as we never did in any other—I to save my daughter from an alliance with your family: you to save your son from a connection with mine."

Colston was more and more surprised at the extraordinary tone Vickeris assumed. This was the very thing he wished to do the moment he heard of the ill-assorted attachment: yet he hesitated for a moment lest, in so rudely snapping such a bond, he should tear up many tender feelings with it. He knew too his son was high spirited, and would not brook much domination on this head even if he were disposed to exercise it: but to be allied to so notoriously a disaffected family, and after the head of that family had himself so insolently spurned the alliance, was an act against which his pride and feelings revolted. In order to have time to consider what was best to be done, he therefore coldly said in reply that he trusted too much to his son's pride and prudence for maintaining the character of his house, to have many fears on that head.

"Place little reliance in one or the other," said Vickeris, "when that silly passion, love, is so strong. Trust rather to time and distance. Better send your son abroad than leave him at home to break his heart about a girl he shall never have;" with that he turned on his heel and departed.

A fortnight after this the future philanthropist sailed for Spain; and considering how generally and correctly conjectured the cause of his departure was at the time, it is only to be wondered at that it has not reached us before. There was a report, too, that the evening before he left, he contrived to have an interview with Ann Vickeris, and that they renewed their vows of constancy. Of this, however, I have no authentic proof; but more than one costly present, which reached her during the year, proved that Colston's love, at least, was unimpaired. For the honour of the fair sex, I wish I could say the same for Mistress Ann Vickeris. Some say she was tyrannized over by her family; others that she heard Colston was married to the daughter of a Spanish Don; and others that she forgot the absent young Royalist in the presence of a handsome young malignant who became her suitor: others that she despaired of old Colston ever sanctioning the marriage. However this may be, at the end of two years after the young philanthropist's departure for Spain she was married to another. Some were surprised, some blamed, and some excused her; but how Colston himself received the intelligence of her broken faith, which reached him soon after, was a secret only known to himself.

To this bitter disappointment, however, we probably owe the munificent charities that now bear his name, and the incalculable

amount of good he did during his life-time. He was of too wholesome and well-regulated a mind — of which affection rather than romance was the pervading character— to fly off into excesses of rage or grief. Nay more, in the benevolence of his nature he may have palliated the infidelity of one whom he so loved, and devised the strongest excuse of any for her weakness. But his heart, nevertheless, keenly felt the deprivation. Be that as it may, however, the precious image which hope and love had set up in his breast being removed and for ever, he determined that philanthropy alone should occupy its place. His mind and sympathies were now free to follow out to the uttermost the noble principles that always actuated them : the boundless benevolence of that nature over which she might have reigned mistress, he determined not to allow any morbid misanthropy or bitter disappointment to congeal ; but to give it up, and consecrate its best impulses to the active service and amelioration of the whole human race. Instead of wasting his energies in sickly repinings for a mistress's infidelity, or revenging himself upon society in general for the fault of one by narrow seclusion from the world, he made this great and generous resolve that he would, as he could not wrap himself in the amiable selfishness of a single love, embrace the whole world in his affections : "If I could not retain the devotion of one," said he, "I will earn the gratitude by achieving the good of thousands : as she whom I would have called my own would not be my wife, every poor widow shall supply her place in my solicitude; and since children are denied me, every orphan shall be my adopted." Posterity knows how he kept his resolve. It seemed as if his disappointment, bitter as it was for the moment, was wisely and providentially ordained, as well for his own fame as for society ; for had the course of true love run smooth, he would now perhaps have been forgotten amongst the amiable husbands of the seventeenth century. He would doubtless have been an excellent father to his family, but possibly not a parent to his native city. And to him the title of "father of the city" truly belonged ; the noblest monuments attest his claim to it—he earned it by a life of active benevolence and charities that will survive him to the end of time.

This disappointment may have induced Edward Colston to remain longer in Spain than at first he determined. For some years before he returned to Bristol, however, there were none in the city who lived in greater splendour than Ann Vickeris (now Silke) and her husband. Hers was evidently a nature too light to be influenced by any lasting love or regret ; and if her mind ever recurred to her first love for Colston, it was possibly only to treat it as an early and mere fancy of youth. It was well for her that the Philanthropist's affection and remembrance were of a more enduring character, for in a few years more a dark cloud passed over their fortunes. A large venture in which her husband was engaged failed : that failure was followed by another and another, and one morning the city was startled from its propriety by the intelligence that "Merchant Silke" was a bankrupt. There were many to express surprise—many to express pity, and several of course to say they

knew it must come to this : for any one who had so filled the public eye as they had could not escape many adverse predictions in his prosperity, and invidious comments when fortune turned round. But there were none out of all who had partaken of their hospitality, none out of all who had thronged to their parties and crowded to their festivities, to offer a helping hand. The gay and prosperous citizen had a host of acquaintances—the ruined merchant had no friend. Poor Ann Vickeris was all powerful as in fine feathers and bare braceleted arms she received her company in the glare of chandeliers and the sound of music; but as she sat alone in her deserted drawing room the day after the failure reduced them to beggary, there were none to call. A week before about the same hour, the loud roll of the knocker would have been constantly heard, and name after name proclaimed as the servant, throwing open that same drawing-room door, announced one morning visitor after another. Now these people passed by on the other side, and muttered as they looked askaunt at the residence of the ruined merchant, "How shocking!" I should be sorry to counsel or inculcate anything inhospitable; but if those who spend their money in feasting hosts of company and acquaintances only saw the melancholy interior of that house on that morning, they would be better able to estimate the value of a fashionable acquaintance. Not that in point of fact the house was altered from what it had been three days before—no, the splendid furniture was still there—none of the rich carpets, the brilliant lustres, and the fine paintings had been removed. The servants were there still —still wore their liveries, but there was an air of undefinable but significant depression over all. The sun shone in and yet there was a gloom in the house—a shade seemed to rest upon everything: the very servants carried the calamity in their countenances, and appeared to convey in their looks as plainly as though it were written in large letters on their foreheads, "Our master is a bankrupt." Laughter had ceased to be heard, and they spoke in a voice less loud and walked about with a step more noiseless as though death were in the house. And had death itself been there, it could not have thrown so sombre a character as that sudden stroke of insolvency did on the residence of the ruined merchant. Poor Ann Vickeris saw this herself. Of too light a nature ever to interest herself in her husband's affairs she previously knew nothing about them, and was not prepared for the calamity : her husband had always afforded her the amplest means of maintaining a fashionable life, and it had never crossed her thoughts that the resources from which she derived the supply could fail. But this sudden stroke of calamity, instead of prostrating a nature so light as hers, placing her in a new though a sad position, gave her something like a new force of character. A terrible reality seemed to have awakened her to increased feeling and sensibility, as she saw in the faces of the domestics when they addressed her (it is true, with the same or perhaps increased respect), something like an expression of melancholy commiseration, which brought the sadness of her situation more bitterly home to her mind.

She was in this frame of mind, when the servant entered to say

that a strange gentleman, who would not give his name, wished to see her. Surprised at such a visitor, she was about to answer she could not see him unless he gave his name; "Say Edward Colston, then," exclaimed the philanthropist entering the room, having the day before returned from Spain.

Of what were the details of that interview, painful perhaps to both, history does not give an account, though no triumph was mingled with the feelings of the good man in seeing one who had so deserted him so humbled. He went not into the bankrupt merchant's house to exult or upbraid: he went as the calm benevolent philanthropist—to be the friend of one who had no friends—to raise a ruined man—to raise a ruined family once more into credit. That was the first of his great works of benevolence in his native city—a work rendered doubly gracious by the circumstances under which it was performed.

. . . . . .

"Many years had rolled by," says the writer of the document from which I quote, "when one Sunday morning I saw Edward Colston, then an old man, standing (as it was his wont when in Bristol at that time to do) by the door of the Cathedral. Age instead of diminishing seemed to add to the benevolent expression of a countenance always handsome, and marked as strongly by good sense as good nature. A bright smile of satisfaction lit up his face as a long troop of his own schoolboys appeared in the green and approached the Cathedral, and as they passed into the sacred building, each lad touching his cap, he patted them kindly on the heads, and had an encouraging word for all. I think I can see his form now before me, his mild expressive aquiline features in cheerful play; his laced coat, fine ruffles, and high-heeled shoes, as he accosted one little urchin after another, while all answered with an almost filial deference and affection. At length, as the last file passed him, his eye discerned a fresh face, and he stopped the new comer to inquire his name. 'Silke, Sir,' said the lad bowing: but before the boy had opened his lips the likeness had announced the fact—he was the grandson of Ann Vickeris. A tear rose to Colston's eye, he had lived to be the benefactor of three generations—how much more gratifying than to have been the founder of one great family."

Attorney Fane.

Almost every street in Bristol has a remarkable house, or has had a remarkable inhabitant. "Here lived so and so," or "there died so and so," says the enumerator or annotator of Bristol topography. Now, amongst our street traditions, there is one I have never seen noticed in print, and the verbal versions of it that I have heard are all, for the most part, so hazy and uncertain that I should like to see a little light thrown upon the subject.

The story is that there lived, some hundred years ago, in a house about half-way down on the east side of Small Street (No. 17), a gentleman, named Fane, who was a diligent, painstaking, and, for an attorney, a quiet man, and was thankful to get 6s. 8d. or 13s. 4d. in the way of business. There was a general impression abroad amongst his co-professionals that he was of a good family, and even was related in a far off way to a lord. Nobody, however, particularly troubled himself about him: he did his work, and paid his way, and lived on the premises, and in the evening met his co-parishioners over a friendly pipe, in that famous house of call, "The Ship," a little further up, in Small Street Court. But one day (so the popular narrative had it), a sudden piece of news flew about that the honest and (*not* consequently) poor attorney had all at once become a lord, and had got a great house in Northamptonshire and another in Yorkshire with estates to match, and that he wanted no more clients, and would smoke no more pipes in the Ship, but would carry his political wisdom to the Chamber of Peers—in short, that Attorney Fane had become the Earl of Westmoreland.

Of course such an incident could not escape romance; it was too unusual an occurrence for a Bristol attorney to "hide his head in a coronet," as Sheridan said, for the gossips to allow it to pass without adding some interesting circumstances of their own to the event. Thus, I remember hearing from an old Bristolian, that on the very morning on which Attorney Fane received the information that, by the death of the last direct heir, the earldom had fallen to his lot, though he was little more than a thirty-first cousin to the deceased peer — I say, on that morning the story goes a purse-proud Bristol tradesman or merchant, a client of Mr. Fane's, called on him to do a piece of law, which Mr. F. did not think was such as a respectable solicitor could with credit undertake, so he respectfully declined it; upon which the other, who had put a great deal of work in the attorney's way, got into a towering rage, charged him with ingratitude, and taunted him with being too fine a gentleman for his business. "You think yourself," said the indignant client, "better able to judge of what's right and what's wrong than a man who might buy you ten times over.

"I think myself capable of judging what is good manners," retorted the attorney; "and as you, sir, do not know how to behave yourself, I desire you to quit my office."

"Quit your office," screamed the Bristol merchant, astonished at the impudence of a poor attorney saying such a thing to a wealthy client. "Who are you, that dare apply such language to me?

Who are you, I repeat, who dare thus presume?" The client had got his back against the door as he made this demand.

"Who am I," replied Fane. "You ask me the question, and I will answer it. I am Thomas, eighth Earl of Westmoreland. That letter which lies there (pointing to the table) informs me that I need no longer trouble myself about your legal affairs, or those of any other man, who does not know how to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong in professional matters. The motto of the house of which I am now the head says, the Fanes 'do nothing that is discreditable,' and I am not going to disgrace a coronet which has so unexpectedly descended to me."

The story, as you may guess, goes on to to say that the rich client was flabbergasted. There was something in the attorney's manner that convinced him the statement was true; and, as mean natures are often at the same time most insolent and fawning, the man who was not ashamed to insult one who he thought was only a poor attorney, was horrified at the idea of speaking so rudely to an earl, so he stammered and mumbled an apology, of which Fane only so far took notice as to assure him that "the only way for the future to avoid being rude to an unknown earl was to be civil to everybody he met," and so he bowed the last client he ever had out into Small Street.

Having been a little curious and incredulous about the whole circumstance, even to doubting if ever a Bristol attorney became a peer of the realm, I took to hunting in Burke for a clue to the matter, and I think I partly got hold of the right man, who no doubt felt that, in getting the title and estates of an ancient house, he was in the right place. The account of Attorney Fane, as you probably have heard, was that there were some thirteen or fourteen between him and the title, so, instead of hoping against all hope, he very properly attended to his profession, looking to get his bread for himself and family as best he could by legal business.

I find that Francis Fane, the first Earl of Westmoreland, who died in 1628, left three sons—Mildmay, who succeeded him as 2nd Earl; Thomas and Francis. This Francis, the third son, had a large family, his eldest son being brought up as a barrister, and his second being named Thomas. Mildmay, the second Earl, who was twice married, left two sons and nine daughters; and was succeeded by the eldest of the former, Charles, the third Earl, who though, like his father, married twice, died without issue; so the title descended to his half-brother, Vere, the fourth Earl, who left six daughters and four sons, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Vere, the fifth Earl, who died unmarried within a few days of being of age; thus the honours devolved upon his brother Thomas, the sixth Earl, who, though married, had died without issue, the Earldom falling to his brother John, the seventh Earl, who died childless in 1762, when the family honours devolved to the next male heir, Thomas Fane, the second son of Francis, who was the third son of the first Earl. This Thomas married a Bristol lady, Frances, daughter of William Swymmer, a merchant, of the city. Thus Thomas became Earl of Westmoreland, though there were between him and the title, at one time or another, as I count them, eleven male heirs, all of whom had to die before the coronet could alight on his brow.

A Queer Inscription.

RICHARD BAGGS.

There used to be, and, I suppose, there still (1866) is (at least I hope no Gothic churchwarden has removed it) at the top of the staircase leading to the north gallery of St. Philip's Church, Bristol, a benefaction board, bearing the following entry:—"*Given by an* UNKNOWN HAND *the sum of twenty pounds, the interest to the poor of this parish for ever.*"

When last I read this brief but almost touching bequest, the gold letters in which it was originally recorded were growing indistinct; but I doubt if I should care to have them renewed or refreshed; for their very dimness seemed to give effect to their purport, and carry us back to the time (whenever it was) when the sum, possibly a large one for the means of the donor, was secretly contributed. It reads like a rebuke to demonstrative givers in all times. Something very different to a feeling of impertinent curiosity made me long to get the secret out of those fast-fading letters, which contrasted in character and spirit with the brighter gold of more modern munificence on other benefaction-boards hard by.

Until about twenty years ago (or perhaps it might not be quite so much) there was another, but quite different inscription, set up in one of the public secular buildings of Bristol. Those who, like myself, were members of the Corporation of the Poor (they call them Poor Law Guardians now, and thus take the shine out of this department of the public service), will remember a panel prominently set up inside and over the door of the Board room of St. Peter's Hospital, on which was painted in very legible letters this stern and blunt inscription:—

> Richard Baggs, an unworthy member of this Corporation, having defrauded the poor, and being detected in the same, paid the sum of £200 to the benefit of the said poor.

There was no beating about the bush here; but a relentless justice, almost Roman, in its uncompromising character—no searching for a mild name for Mr. Baggs's conduct—no calling of it a mere mistake or error of judgment, or at most an equivocal act; which probably would be the case now, especially if Mr. B. were a manager, or promoter, or "floater" of a Limited Liability Company, by which thousands and tens of thousands were lost to the poor, and the rich, too. Were he a railway director or a railway projector, or possibly a railway contractor, and lived in our day, they would be sure to call his act not fraud, but "financing." Unfortunately, however, for Mr. Baggs's fame, he existed, and did evil in an age when people called a spade a spade—were rough and ready in judging of men or things, and were not mealy-mouthed in expressing their judgment. He was not, unluckily for his fame,

a projector of public companies, but the member of a body to which a number of stubborn, old-fashioned, honest Bristolians belonged, and when they caught him playing the rogue, especially towards the poor, they did not condone or compromise the offence, or take a sum of money from him privately and hush it up, and say he was not a bad man himself but the victim of a bad system which, and not the individual, ought to be blamed. No; they openly exposed and publicly by name gibbeted the man, besides making him refund the money (and possibly more) of which he had defrauded the poor. They were not content with publishing him in the newspapers (if, indeed, there were newspapers in his day), for it would then be only a nine days' wonder. When the frail sheet upon which it was printed was cut up into curl papers or distributed round pounds of butter, the thing would be forgotten, and Richard Baggs would after a few months' retirement reappear in public and brazen it out. No; these old Bristolians stuck it up in view, manifest and palpable as a monument, so that all who ran, or at least who entered, might read over the doorway of the court which was the scene of his fraud, and where they probably meant it to remain for ever—a warning to all future ages.

But future ages have been more lenient to Richard Baggs than were his contemporaries. The board has disappeared. I have not seen it for the last twenty years. Perhaps our modern guardians thought the unhappy man had been sufficiently punished for his offence—had hung in chains, or rather in paint, long enough, and in very pity to his manes had cut him down. It might be that they were struck with the inconsistency of keeping Richard Baggs in a perpetual pillory for fraud—posting him in this palpable fashion—while so many prosperous knaves were abroad in the world, living in fine houses, riding in fine carriages, and against whom no tongue wags save in private. Probably the persons who removed the panel from over the door in St. Peter's Hospital said to themselves, "Either old Baggs ought to come down, or in all fairness others ought to go up—*Fiat Justitia!* Why should a beggarly offender of this kind, a mere purloiner of the poor, be gibbeted for ever and a day, while So-and-So and So-and-So are flourishing like green bay trees upon riches gained not much more respectably? It is a grim mockery to keep that wretched man there, unless you put up like malediction signs over the doorway of many a boardroom in which railway directors, and limited bank directors, and financial companies' directors weekly meet. But what painter will be found bold enough to paint us the long lists of 'respectable' men who, sitting at such boards, have defrauded poor and rich, and are still called, not 'unworthy,' but 'worthy?'"

So the Bristol guardians determined to take down old Baggs, and make lucifer matches of the panel; and it was done, or at least the panel has disappeared. Finding it impossible to gibbet all the rogues that a prolific age hastening to be rich has produced, they thought it hypocrisy to keep up this one unlucky varlet.

Perhaps after all Baggs had only to blame himself for his punishment. The inscription tells us that not only did he defraud, but he "was detected in the same." There is a proverb which says

that the crime is not in the fact, but in being found out. The "unworthy member" of the Corporation of the Poor was manifestly a bungler in the practical exercise of dishonesty and the fine arts of knavery, and was detected. He wanted the accomplishment, the cleverness of more modern schemers, who have discovered how to cheat, how to defraud, I will not say without being found out, but without any one daring to "board," or post them up, or panel them in this downright fashion. Ah, Richard Baggs, Richard Baggs, you were an anachronism—you lived before your proper time. If you moved on the world's stage now you would find us much more indulgent—"to your faults," not merely "a little kind"—more ready to account in an amiable manner for your "mistake" than were those grim unforgiving old Bristolians who "damned you to everlasting fame" in that terrible panel, which probably for more than a century looked down from above the doorway upon the weekly meetings of the Corporation of the Poor.

If it had been taken down only within the last two years or so, those who took it down would have been right: for it would be a gross inconsistency, a sham, to keep it up, while things of which we hear are daily occurring, and being condoned, amongst us. But if it was removed as far back as twenty or even ten years, it may be that we owe some of our recent rogueries to the doing away with so wholesome an example—so palpable and outspoken a terror to evil-doers. *Post hoc ergo propter hoc.* If our financial rascalities have followed the removal of Baggs's board—or have transpired since its removal, as I believe they have—then may we not lay at the doors of those feeble weak-minded men, who pitied a public defrauder and took down the record of Richard Baggs, the blame of many of the moral and monetary iniquities from which English society is suffering through the length and breadth of the land? If we were only to gibbet (as R. B. was gibbeted) a couple of hundred of our most recent "rogues in buckram," "knaves of rank," we believe we should have much fewer frauds and failures to complain of.

Be this, however, as it may, here goes for an attempt to account for the two queer inscriptions above referred to in a fragmentary sketch of

THE UNKNOWN HAND.

The afternoon was cold, wet and cheerless: the few who attended morning service at St. Philip's Church had reached their homes: the last old almswoman was tottering with her Sunday dole of bread across the wide churchyard which she must soon tenant, and the two worthy wardens, having drawn on their great coats, were preparing to turn their faces towards their roast beef, when an old man, poorly and thinly clad, entered the vestry. The senior recognised him as a person whom he had noticed for the last few Sundays sitting on the lowest form of the free seats, always humbly and always devoutly, at least to human eye, engaged in worship. Thinking, therefore, that the old man's errand could only be for one object—an application for charity—he turned to the sexton, and ordered him a loaf, offering him at the same time a small silver coin from his own pocket.

"Thank you," said the old man, meekly (and there was that in his voice which spoke of better days); "I came not to ask charity, but to beg of you to be the almoners of a trifle." So saying he took a small cotton bag from his pocket, and as he laid it down on the vestry table its contents jingled like gold.

"I would commend these few pounds to your care, gentlemen," he added; "the interest thereof to be distributed to the poor of the parish for ever," and he turned and left the vestry.

Surprised at the contrast between the outward appearance of the visitor and his object, as well as by the suddenness and singularity of the whole affair, the churchwardens remained looking at each other for a minute and then, recollecting that the donor had not left name or address, the junior seized his hat, and hastening after the old man, overtook him while, stooping and feeble, he was yet struggling against the wind and the rain across the churchyard.

"You forgot to leave us your name," said he; but the old man did not seem to hear, or, if he did, not to heed him, The churchwarden laid his hand on his shoulder, and repeated the words.

"It is of no consequence," replied the old man; "my name signifies nothing."

"But from whom shall we say it comes?" again inquired the churchwarden.

"From an unknown hand—an *unknown hand*"—muttered the old man, as he went out at the gate, and the churchwarden returned to the vestry.

The following week an addition was made to the benefaction board, and the gift from "an unknown hand" thus simply and shortly inscribed.

. . . . . .

Next Sunday the old man was missed from his usual place in the free seats. Another and another Sabbath succeeded, and he was not there. Interested in his fate from the singularity of the circumstance related, the churchwardens made inquiries amongst the poor, and at length ascertained that he had been seen to enter more than once a wretched tenement in Poyntzpool, a neighbourhood even then the most abounding in vice and immorality of any in the parish. They proceeded to the house, and on inquiring of the poor creature that kept it, found that the old man was dead—he had died that morning. The body lay on a straw pallet; on a broken chair the old man's clothes—the only property (if such they might be called) he had apparently left, though he had paid for his lodgings the day previous to his death. The churchwardens searched the clothes, in the hope of finding something that would lead to the identification of the aged stranger, in whom they were so singularly interested: but to no purpose. At length the old woman bethought her she had seen him with a prayer book, and on raising the head of the corpse, and looking under the pillow, they found it there. They opened it, and read in the first page—

Richard Baggs, an unworthy member of this Corporation, having defrauded the poor, and being detected in the same, paid the sum of £200 for the benefit of the said poor.

Underneath this, and evidently very recently written, was a copy of the inscription on the benefaction board :—

> Gave by an unknown hand the sum of twenty pounds, the interest thereof to the poor of this parish for ever.

Opposite the first record was written—"Nay, ye do wrong and defraud : and that your brethren." Opposite the second—"I will hear from Heaven, and forgive his sin."

There were none by who could recognise the face which there lay cold and rigid on the pallet : but the few cognisant of the circumstances concluded the "unknown hand" was that of the unfortunate and unworthy member of the Corporation of the Poor, whose fraud was so long chronicled in the Court of St. Peter's Hospital, in the words above given. He went abroad soon after his exposure a broken-hearted man, and had returned, it was conjectured, to make all the requital he could—to repent and to die unknown, unnamed, and unfriended.

Jenny Rudge.

A STORY OF OLD DURDHAM DOWN.

Old Durdham Down! it is prim and neat enough now, with its young trees and its smooth drives—the last gracefully curving round to the Sea Walls, made mainly through the efforts of Mr. Thomas, when Mayor—and its close turf. But I remember a time when it was rude and rustic, and I liked it better. When the great bunches of old gorse blazed out in their yellow glory in the late spring, and patches of tall bracken, brown and sered in autumn, gave it a russet mellowness in mid Fall. It was something like an adventure to pass over the Down then as night approached, when you had to make your way through thorn brakes and furze chin-deep, and you were not quite sure that a couple of fellows with short bludgeons or brass-barrelled pistols would not make their appearance from a tuft of thorn trees, and ask you, in a style more laconic than polite, for your spare cash. There is nothing of that kind of thing now. The dry furze plats have been burned up since the days when Lucifer inspired some chemist to make the matches called after his name, and young ruffians to apply them to the pernicious purpose of destroying one of the most characteristic features of our broad and beautiful common. Furze, and bracken, and highwaymen have all disappeared : and I was going to say I am sincerely sorry for it, only that highwaymen, however picturesque in story and romance, are objects to whom distance lends more enchantment than a nearer view. What between the County Constabulary and the Downs Committee, there is no covert or opportunity for gentlemen of the picturesque and exciting calling of Richard Turpin and Claude Duval, Esquires.

Before the time, however, to which my most remote memory extends, there were other ornaments of the Down still more interesting, if also terribly grim and ghastly. It was a place of gibbets!—three of these tall structures having decorated it within the memory of an old Cliftonian with whom I conversed not more than a quarter of a century ago. From Westbury Hill to the corner of Gallows' Acre Lane, the noble area was full of memories of murder and robbery, and if you happen to be crossing Westbury churchyard along the path which leads from the turn of the Eastfield Road to the south porch of the sacred building, you will read on a little mossy headstone that underneath lie interred the remains of one Rudge, I think it is (but no relation of the subject of my story) the coachman of a former Sir Robert Cann, of Stoke House, that was plundered and done to death on the said Downs by a couple of footpads who, being caught, convicted and hanged, were dipped in a bituminous composition, encaged in iron basket-work, and suspended from tall poles, thence to dangle and decay away—a terror to evildoers as also to those who did well, in the persons of simple peasants who had to cross the greensward after sundown.

The last and most memorable of all these gibbeted gentlemen was one Shenkin Protheroe, who was hanged by the neck until he

was dead in 1783, and then suspended from a tall piece of timber with crossbeam, fixed at a spot as near as possible to where the little round tower now leads down into the tunnel of the railway, as it crosses the head of Pembroke Road, which, with its churches and villas, occupies the site of the once narrow thoroughfare with the ill-omened name. Shenkin was a sort of demon cripple, a "Billy-in-the-Bowl" without legs, or at least legs that would bear him up, but with powerful arms, which compensated him for the loss of his lower limbs, and with which, and the aid of a couple of little hand stools, he contrived to move about deftly enough, exciting the pity and attracting the alms of those he passed in his uncouth peregrinations. One of the persons whose compassion he awakened was a cattle drover, who drew from his pocket a long leather purse, from which he gave him some coppers. The cripple, however, had a keen eye as well as a cruel heart, and saw, as the man undid his money bag, some gold and silver as well as pence and halfpence in the pouch. This excited the creature's greed, and learning from him that he was returning that same evening to Hallen-in-the-Marshes, he set his infernal ingenuity to work and contrived a clever plot to rob his benefactor. With nightfall, Shenkin contrived to hide himself in a ditch near the same spot at the top of the lane, and there awaited his victim. As soon as he descried the stalwart figure of the drover approach on his homeward road, he raised a cry of distress. The man drew near to see from whom the sounds came, when Shenkin piteously explained that he had fallen into the ditch, and, owing to his helpless condition, was unable to extricate himself. The good-natured drover descended into the hollow to help him out, and as he stooped down, the cripple, who was prepared for the opportunity, drew forth a knife and stabbed him to the heart, when taking the leathern pouch, which was his temptation, from the poor man's pocket, he escaped with his booty, but only for a short time. Suspicion was awakened by the circumstance that the cripple was seen in the neighbourhood about the time the murder was committed, and he was arrested, when proof of his guilt was found on his person. He was tried, hung, and gibbeted on the spot where the crime was committed, and where he swung in the breeze and bleached in the sun for some years—a conspicuous object to the traveller as he emerged from Gallows' Acre Lane, as it opened on the Down close to where the Zoological Gardens harbour lions, bears and tigers.

Here the gibbet stood erect for a considerable time, until decay and disgust caused the grim and ghastly object to be removed. But for years, before a consummation devoutly wished for by all belated travellers whose homes lay on the other side of the Down came to pass, such a fear was there of the suspended skeleton that it was the practice of the country folks to make a party and cross when companionship supplied courage. If one or two persons happened to be on their way home, they waited at the top of Richmond Hill until they were joined by their neighbours; as perhaps in the whole hundred or tything you could not find a single rustic, man or woman, bold enough to pass the gibbet alone after dark. We have advanced since then greatly in knowledge; nevertheless, I doubt, were Shenkin Protheroe still swinging in his

chains on the old spot on a winter's night, when there was just enough of moonlight to cast ghostly and fitful gleams on objects, if any of us would feel very comfortable in walking alone under the projecting beam, and hearing and seeing the bleached bones of the murderer creaking and swinging in their cage of hoop iron over our heads.

Well (and now to my story), it so happened that at the time the gibbet was erected, there lived in the village of Westbury a well-to-do old couple, Farmer Rudge and his wife, who had an only daughter, a comely girl, somewhat spoiled and a little wilful. As the girl was bound to have a good bit of money, there were plenty of young sparks very ready to make up to her, as the phrase is, and Jenny for her part would have been only too happy to make any amount of love with the smart fellows. But the old folks were lynx-eyed and jealous. They were in no hurry to get their daughter married. And small blame to them: as it is very provoking, when you have watched a girl through teething, whooping-cough, measles, writing, reading, and arithmetic, and are just beginning to be repaid by her company for some of the trouble and cost at which you have been, to find her immediately make to herself wings and fly off with some young chap, who, having none of the trouble, has the entire enjoyment of her society. Again, old Rudge, who had a good penny to give his daughter, did not like the class of suitors who flocked to his door, and who were, for the most part, smart apprentices in Bristol whose Sunday walk took them to Westbury, and who liked the idea of making a conquest of the rustic maid with a good dower.

Beyond the door, however, none of them got. Old Rudge and his wife did not stand on ceremony, and if any of the sparks crossed the threshold with a "How do you do, farmer?" he was very quickly given to understand the sooner he made himself scarce the better. Nevertheless, Miss Jenny managed to have more than a dozen words with Dick Foyle, the hosier's apprentice, in Wine Street, when she visited the shop on market days to make a purchase, and Dick Foyle, for his part, on not a few occasions managed to snatch a short interview with Jenny as she crossed Westbury churchyard after service on Sunday. At length the two young people arrived at the silly determination that either could not be happy without the other: but they were not such simpletons as to imagine that the young lady's parents would give their consent to her union with a penniless shopboy, so they resolved upon taking the obvious course of running away.

Jenny secretly got things ready for her clandestine flight, and Dick made equally active preparations for the same interesting journey. Their mode of communicating with one another during the preparatory proceedings was by slipping notes into an old cucumber frame at the end of the garden, which could be easily reached over the privet hedge which bounded the farmer's cottage from a narrow footpath close by. A day or two before the intended elopement, it being Sunday, Dick left Bristol with a note in his pocket for the old cucumber frame, and very adroitly dropped it in, when he thought the farmer and family were at church. But it unfortunately happened that Master Rudge did not feel well

that morning; he had taken some new cider which disagreed with him, and so he remained at home and dozed away in his easy chair over the fire, instead of under the sermon in church. While so engaged, he heard a step on the gravel footpath, and thinking someone was come to steal his carrots, he peeped carefully out from a corner of the window, and saw Dick drop his love missive into the old cucumber frame. Allowing the youth to retire out of sight, the farmer secured, opened, and read the letter, and was more surprised than delighted to learn therefrom that everything was prepared and ready for their flight on the following Tuesday night. Need I say what course Farmer Rudge took under these circumstances?

There "was no elopement after all." Jenny's mother took upon herself the special duty of never letting "the silly hussy" out of her sight, while Farmer Rudge himself trudged into Bristol, an oak stick in his hand, and entering the hosier's shop in Wine Street, informed Dick, the disconsolate lover, that if he again caught him sneaking about the premises he would break every bone in his body, for an impudent "counter hopper" as he was.

Dick Foyle, the bold apprentice, however, was not a lad to be daunted with one failure. But to get speech or signal with his sweetheart for months he could not, so keenly was she guarded by the domestic dragons. One or other always kept her in view, never leaving her at home even when they went to market, but taking her into Bristol with them, and keeping her closely at their side. But Dick was a man of resources, and he bided his time.

One scowling and stormy night, late in the autumn of '86, a little group of Westbury neighbours were waiting for reinforcements at the usual rendezvous at Gallows' Acre-lane, ere they made the nervous passage of the Down, when Farmer Rudge, wife, and Jenny joined them. The travellers, now thinking themselves sufficiently strong to pass Shenkin's gibbet without any particular tremours, resumed their homeward course. Indeed, it was a night to try the strength of rustic nerves. The wind moaned and howled, and ere the party could discern the dim outlines of the gloomy gibbet, they could hear its timbers creak and the chain rattle as, like a huge iron censer, the cage which contained the skeleton of the murderer swung to and fro in the storm. The pilgrims stuck together very close, mentally wishing they were at home at their own firesides, when, just as the party arrived near the gibbet, a streak of moonlight broke out from the dark clouds and showed Shenkin's remains fearfully agitated in mid-air, as though Satan himself seemed busy making a pendulum of the murderer's bones.

"Seemed," did I say? nay, by all that is ghostly, the Evil One, in *propria persona*, appeared to the affrighted rustics to be busy with the mortal remains of the wicked Welshman: for at that moment down there glided, with a supernatural sound, from the gibbet amongst them a dark figure fearful to look upon, had the homeward-bound company waited to make ocular observation; but, with a scream of terror, the party dispersed and fled in all directions, little disposed to have a nearer acquaintance with the hideous Shenkin. Old Rudge was stout enough, if he had man or beast to deal with and a strong oaken staff in his hand, but the

tales that were told round the firesides of Westbury of the awful sights and sounds seen and heard near Protheroe's gibbet, on the margin of those lone dark Downs, had made such an impression upon the superstitious old couple that, in the first moments of their fright, they forgot their daughter, and it was not until they had fled almost as far as the pathway to Stoke that they missed Jenny. Then did they call in frantic voices for her, but though a few of the neighbours rejoined them, and they retraced their way some distance in the direction of the gibbet, no voice answered theirs, and no sight of their daughter could they get. They began to think, and their friends confirmed the hope, that the girl, being light of limb had in her fright outrun them all, and was probably by that time at home in Westbury. But what was the old people's alarm, on arriving at the house, to learn that Jenny had not made her appearance. A number of lanterns and assistants were obtained, and the Downs again traversed in all directions, but to no purpose. Jenny could not be found; and no wonder, for the young fly-away was before morning's break snugly lodged at Aust with an old aunt of Master Dick Foyle's, the bold apprentice being himself her charioteer on the occasion.

"None but the brave," says the poet, "deserves the fair," and Dick was a stout jolly lad, and had his deserts. Finding all other means of getting possession of his sweetheart fail, he concocted, in concert with a fellow apprentice as hardy as himself, the scheme which proved so successful. Shenkin Protheroe, too, was pressed into the service. Dick knew the custom of the country folk on that side of the city to make up a party in order to pass the Downs after nightfall; so his companion climbed the gibbet, fastened a rope to the cross-beam, and there perched himself until the country people approached, swinging poor Shenkin's remains most violently to and fro as the party approached the skeleton, and, just as they were under it, he glided with an unearthly sound swiftly down the rope, as though Shenkin himself were coming amongst them.

By a note cunningly slipped into her pocket in the crush of the market, Jenny was made acquainted with the plot, and in the confusion and flight attending the startling apparition, Dick placed her in a Whitechapel cart, which he had waiting close by, and drove her off to Aust.

When it was too late to refuse the old people gave their consent, and Dick, who was as steady as he was bold, went and lived with them, and managed the farm. In the fulness of time, the two old folks were "put to bed with a spade" in Westbury churchyard, and Dick and Jenny, who were now become a jolly couple set round with young rosy faces, when they drove into Bristol market always laughed at the thought of old times, as they passed under Shenkin's gibbet. The worthy couple survived the gibbet, but when it was being taken down, Dick secured a piece of the timber, and had it turned into a tobacco box, on the top of which he had carved the words, "To the memory of Shenkin Protheroe, Esq." Dick has long been gathered to his fathers, but the tobacco-box is still preserved in the family, and the story of his grand-father's night lark is now told by the grandson, an elderly man, for the amusement of an occasional friend.

The Mystery of College-Green.

Raro antecedentem scelestum
Deseruit pede Pœna claudo.
Hor., car. iii., 2.

There is a singular interest attaching to undiscovered crimes. In ordinary cases, only a short time elapses after the discovery of the deed before certainty or suspicion indicates the perpetrator. Public opinion, ever on the watch for that which will most excite its horror or stimulate its praise, has thus soon afforded to it an object on which it may wreak its fullest expression; and with the discovery and capture of the offender, the thrilling interest in the unknown assailant, the breathless curiosity with which every particular of circumstantial evidence is greedily listened to, and, in a word, the air of mysterious fascination involving the whole affair, in a large decree immediately subside. A clue has been found for the perplexing labyrinth in which the surmises of the public so long wandered blindfold, and the goal of curiosity is attained. As to the rest, the law takes its usual course, and justice is appeased.

Such is the ordinary course of a crime in England: but it does sometimes happen that cases occur with a totally different result. Public attention is roused by some crime of peculiar atrocity. The resources of the police are placed in requisition in every direction, efforts are made to discover the offender at considerable outlay, evidence is sought for and witnesses examined Still the cloud of mystery grows darker, a chase in which every turn has lent new interest to the pursuit and fresh excitement to the pursuers, in time grows wearisome: one day reveals an apparent clue, only for the next to expose its falsity; until at length, finding herself mocked and deluded at every turn, Justice, though unsatisfied, is compelled to abandon the search in despair, and confess herself baffled and disappointed by the wary criminal.

A conclusion like this, so far from destroying the popular interest in the case, will stimulate it to the highest pitch, and in all probability invest the tale with a degree of mysterious attraction sufficient to preserve it fresh in the memory of the next generation.

Few, comparatively, of the crowds who daily pass and repass our College-green—who frequent its brilliant shops, loiter under its shady trees, or, more rare by far, steal a few minutes from the ordinary avocations of life to join in the services of its venerable cathedral—are aware that one hundred years ago that locality, then so quiet, was the scene of a most appalling and mysterious tragedy.

The writer remembers, many years ago, walking through the Green on a Sunday morning, in company with one of the oldest members of the Corporation, who, pausing opposite a house, between the Church of St. Augustine and the Cathedral, bade him remark that its exterior had been modernized, while he proceeded

to tell how, three quarters of a century before, there resided in that same house an aged lady and her female servant.

One breezy morning in September, 1764, the shutters were opened and the blinds drawn up as usual, and Mrs. Ruscombe and Mary Sweet, her maid, went in and out as heretofore. About noon someone going to the house found their knock unheeded, all was silent. This excited suspicion, an alarm was raised, and an entrance speedily gained. To their utter horror the foremost, on entering, found Mary Sweet murdered on the stairs, while an extended search soon discovered the unfortunate lady herself, with her throat cut, a corpse on the floor of her bedroom.

Such a deliberate murder in broad daylight could not but create an intense sensation. The whole city was aroused. Silently, skilfully, and with secresy had the wretch fulfilled his dreadful task. No human eye saw him enter on his errand of death, none saw him quit on its accomplishment. Every measure that wisdom could suggest or to which justice could have recourse was immediately adopted. The Corporation of Bristol, impressed with the necessity for immediately investigating a crime whose horror was only equalled by the mystery attending it, came forward with a reward of £200 for the detection of the assassin, and to this Mr. Robert Nugent, one of the members for the city, added a farther sum of £500, both unfortunately without the slightest success. Years rolled on, and the history of the transaction still remained enveloped in its original silence, while the house which had been the theatre of so frightful a tragedy lay void and closed—blighted as it were by an evil influence, for encountering which no one apparently possessed the requisite courage.

The foregoing facts have been recalled to mind principally by some passages in a volume of De Quincey's, entitled "Miscellanies," where (p. 28), in an article headed "Murder as one of the Fine Arts," he writes as follows :—

To the best of my remembrance this (Mrs. Ruscombe's murder) was in 1764 ; upwards of sixty years have now elapsed, and yet the artist is still undiscovered. The suspicions of posterity have settled on two pretenders, a baker and a chimney sweeper. But posterity is wrong ; no unpractised artist could have conceived so bold an idea as that of a noonday murder in the heart of a great city * * I came to know who the artist was from a celebrated surgeon who assisted at his dissection. This gentleman had a private museum in the way of his profession, one corner of this was occupied by a cast from a man of remarkably fine proportions. "That" said the surgeon, "is a cast from the celebrated Lancashire highway-man, who concealed his profession for some time from his neighbours, by drawing woollen stockings over his horse's legs, and in that way muffling the clatter which he must else have made in riding up a flagged ally that led to his stable. At the time of his execution for highway robbery, I was studying under Cruickshank, and the man's figure was so uncommonly fine that no money or exertion was spared to get into possession of him with the least possible delay. By the connivance of the Under-sheriff, he was cut down within the legal time and instantly put into a chaise and four ; so that when he reached Cruickshank's he was positively not dead. Mr. —, a young student at that time, had the honour of giving him the *coup de grace* and finishing the sentence of the law." I was repeating this anecdote one day to a Lancashire lady, who thereupon informed me that she had herself lived in the neighbourhood of that highway-man, and well remembered two circumstances which combined, in the opinion of all his neighbours, to fix

upon him the credit of Mrs. Ruscombe's affair. One was the fact of his absence for a whole fortnight at the period of that murder; the other, that within a very little time after the neighbourhood of this highwayman was deluged with dollars. Now Mrs. Ruscombe was known to have hoarded 2000 of that coin. Be the artist, however, who he might, the affair remains a durable monument of his genius, for such was the impression of awe and the sense of power left behind by the strength of conception manifested in this murder, that no tenant (as I was told in 1810) had been found up to that time for Mrs. Ruscombe's house.

It is a matter of regret that De Quincey does not give us the name of the culprit, or the particular crime for which he suffered. If the lady's surmise was correct as to the highwayman's identity with Mrs. Ruscombe's murder, it is but another proof of that retributive justice which sooner or later tracks the footsteps of the murderer, a doctrine in which even Horace himself was a firm believer. Here, then, in all probability we reach the final limits of all that will ever be known respecting this mysterious affair. For fifty years did the house, shunned and desolate, stand out before the busy city, a silent witness, like the skeleton at the Egyptian banquets, reminding those who passed its door and gazed at its dusty windows of the fearful end of its last inmates, an end which from the same source might yet with equal secrecy terminate their own thread of existence. As a last resource the house was refronted and otherwise altered in appearance, a proceeding which at length secured a tenant, since which time it apparently has borne an irreproachable character, and given its inhabitants no cause for uneasiness. The file of *Felix Farley*, in the Commercial Rooms, does not extend beyond Nov., 1764, or doubtless many additional particulars might be gathered from the current papers of the day respecting so remarkable an incident. In closing these desultory remarks, we will only add that the records of by-gone days are always interesting and frequently suggestive, and if in comparing 1855 with 1764, we are struck with the almost fabulous progress which the interval has produced in art and science, we must blush while we admit that an age so remarkable for high refinement as the present, should nevertheless exhibit a catalogue of crimes equal in magnitude if not in number to the worst periods of the last century.

[The house no longer stands, having been pulled down some time between 1865 and 1875 to form part of the site of the large hotel, "The Royal," on the south-east side of the Green.]

A

FEW OTHER PAPERS

FROM THE SAME PEN.

I have two reasons for adding the following to "Brief Romances from Bristol History." In the first place, the latter did not make enough by themselves to be entitled to the dignity of binding in boards; supplemental matter was therefore needed to bring them up to the regulation bulk. In the second place—I have, from time to time, had applications made to me for copies of some of the papers now appended (chiefly I believe for the purpose of Penny Readings) without being able to comply with the request, owing to there being left no back numbers of the newspapers in which they originally appeared. I have accordingly availed myself of the present easy opportunity to supply them.

A Paper on Penny Readings.

BY ONE WHO BROKE DOWN.

Whether I am the Parson, the Lawyer, or the Doctor of the village of B—— would be of no consequence to the reader, but that my brief narrative does, in some measure, turn upon my profession. B—— was amongst the first places to catch the fever for Penny Readings. There had been some successful recitations at T——, and B—— resolved not to be behind the age. Our national schoolmaster, who was a man of big words and lofty thoughts, said in the parlour of "the Crown" on Saturday night "I tell you what, my friends! Penny Readings are the great feature of the times in which we live." The general shopkeeper, who sat in the opposite chair, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and concurred with the schoolmaster, and thereupon they all agreed, did that coterie at "the Crown," that B—— should be no longer without its great reciting and rhetorical institution.

The upshot of it was that, on Monday morning, a deputation waited on me in my surgery: I might as well say I'm the Doctor. So many entering the room at the same time made me conclude it must be a murder or fatal accident; at any rate, that it was a call to attend the Coroner, and that a guinea at the least would come out of it. Nothing of the kind. The schoolmaster, who was the spokesman, opened the pleadings with a spirited panegyric on the social, moral, civil, and civilising effect of Penny Readings. The elocutionist, he said, was to become the real instructor of the age, the educator of the masses, who were to get all their knowledge and virtue and religion for the future in verse: would I kindly take part in a series of soirées, to be held in the National Schoolroom for this purpose? They had been already to the Clergyman and the Attorney, and both had promised their co-operation.

I unhesitatingly said I should be most happy to do the same, and at once produced a shilling to pay for twelve tickets, though to consume them in my own household I must frank the dispensary-boy, the gardener, and the groom. They were much obliged, they replied, but this, they explained, was not exactly what they wanted. They wanted me to take part in the readings, to recite something comic or serious: serio-comic, tragedy, or pastoral comedy. I was amazingly tickled with the idea of my becoming public orator for the village: I, who never heard my own voice out of ordinary conversation, to get up on a platform and recite off the reel, as the saying is, a string of verses! The Parson had promised and chosen "Gray's Elegy," and the Attorney "Lochinvar" and "Alexander Selkirk." My wife came in at the

moment, and decided that I must not be behind my neighbours, or rather, that she should not be behind the neighbours' wives, so that before the deputation quitted the surgery they had put me down for Cowper's "Jackdaw," my better half averring that if I had an intellectual tendency one way or another, it was rather to light and airy description.

The reason why my wife thought of the Jackdaw was that she once heard me read it to the children many years ago one winter's night, and I verily believe it is the only piece of poetry she ever heard me read. I do not know if the person who is perusing this paper has ever seen the piece. Most probably he has: I believe it is common enough. It is a little stroke of playful philosophy by one of England's most genial and gentle poets. It begins—

There is a bird, who by his coat,
And by the hoarseness of his note,
  Might be supposed a crow:
A great frequenter of the Church,
Where, bishop-like, he finds a perch,
  And dormitory too.

However, the most effective verse, or at least that which gives best scope for the elocutionary powers of the reader, is the fifth, which is as follows:—

He sees that this great roundabout,
The world, with all its motley rout,
  Church, army, physic, law,
Its customs and its businesses,
Is no concern at all of his,
  And says—what says he?—*caw*.

If I was to shine at all it must be in these six lines, and the first fit of trepidation over, I did, I must confess, nourish a lurking fancy that I should make a hit here. I planned it in my own mind how I should give point to each of the four professions in the third line. The parson and village lawyer, who were on the committee, would in all probability have the posts of honour on the platform, and I should so artfully contrive it that my neighbour B———, who is a Lieutenant in the S——— Volunteer Rifles, and was likewise to recite, should also have a place assigned him in the same row, and thus, when I came to the telling line,

Church, *army*, PHYSIC, LAW.

I should point in succession, and with culminating emphasis, to the parson, the rifleman, myself, and the attorney. Could anything possibly be better: the least I could expect was four cheers, one after each allusion, with one more for myself and my success. I also meditated another bold stroke in the last line of the verse,

And says—what says he?—CAW.

There I determined to give such a "*caw*" as would not only astonish the audience, but the rooks outside on the old church tower. Nevertheless, I had some unpleasant fears lest I should not hit off the exact note—lest I should pitch the caw too high or too low—give it too loudly or too timidly—make it a crowning success, or in fact—*make a fool of myself*. I was ashamed to practice

it in the house, lest the cook or dispensary boy should overhear me and think master had gone demented. In my drives through the country I could not try it, because my groom, who sat by my side, would be sure to come to the same awful conclusion as to my sanity. I hit on a plan: instead of putting her in harness I had the mare saddled, and on two or three days made my professional round on horseback. When I got into a retired and lonesome road, after taking the precaution to look both before and behind, that there should be no witnesses of my folly, I began reciting and cawing away until the very crows in the field came flying and wheeling over my head, to see who their new friend was.

Unhappily for me, however, if woods have not ears, according to the adage, bushes do sometimes harbour folks who have the faculty of hearing. There was a good-for-nothing fellow in our village, whose proclivities, as the Americans say, were chiefly for poaching. This rascal was snaring rabbits under a hedge as I came along, and, fearing detection, he so crouched and concealed himself that I never suspected a human being was near; the rogue, however, had the full benefit of my recitation, cawing included, and, as I afterwards learnt, declared that evening in the alehouse, that the Doctor was mad, gone clean daft out of his senses—that I fancied myself a crow, and kept cawing as I rode through the country. Of course, at the moment, I was fortunately unconscious of this vile gossip: nevertheless, I had from time to time misgivings, and my promised Penny Reading began to trouble me more than all my practice. I have had cases which broke my rest, but nothing has ever kept me awake so long as this confounded Jackdaw, which ought to have been a croaking raven, so ill-omened a bird was it to me: I only wonder I did not kill some of my patients through absence or distraction of mind. While it was hanging about me, I used to start up in my sleep, fancying I heard rooks at the bedroom window, and every time I passed a church there were sure to be four of those glossy black birds on the pinnacles cawing to me, as to a poor relation, from their proud altitude. At length, a day before my first appearance in public upon that or any other stage, my wife, who felt no doubt that her honour was bound up in mine—that any laurels I won in the elocution line must overshadow her as well as myself—suggested I should give a private rehearsal in the parlour; she and the girls to act as the *élite*, and the surgery-boy, cook, housemaid, groom, and gardener, as the general public of B——

"Nonsense, my dear; I could not have the face to do it; make a fool of myself in my own house? it is out of the question."

"But," says she, very naïvely, "if you are afraid to make a fool of yourself before so few people, what will you do to-morrow night when you have three or four hundred to hear you?"

"I tell you what I shall do, my dear," I said. "Old Mrs. A. has the bronchitis very badly, and I shall have an urgent call to see her, and leave you and the villagers to the Parson, Lawyer Smith, and Lieutenant Brown."

"Look here," was her determined answer, "if you do anything half so cowardly as to run away from a Penny Reading, to turn

your back upon a poor Jackdaw, I shall hold you in contempt for the rest of your life, and denounce you to all your friends."

Of course, as I might as well be dead as in disgrace with my wife, I determined, whatever happened, to stand my ground, and caw it out. Oh, trembling spirit of modesty, oh, blushing genius of bashfulness! How hot my face was when I took my place on the platform with my other three reciters! I did take a pint of brown sherry just before leaving home to keep my courage up a little; but it only flew into my countenance, causing a confusion which threatened forgetfulness of even the words of my piece. There was hardly an upturned face amongst the audience, all looking towards us, and towards me particularly I fancied, whose owner I had not physicked some time or another, and yet I grew as nervous under their gaze as though I had committed some crime, and was about to be tried.

And had I not committed a crime, I thought, or something worse than a crime, according to old Talleyrand, an egregious *blunder*, in ever consenting to make an ass of myself before my own patients. But stop, I said; let me reflect another moment, and I shall be sure to break down; the only chance a man has in passing over a dizzy height is not to look into the abyss beneath him. I must not look down into the yawning depth of folly over which I have consented to pass on a single plank. Cheer up, old fellow, then, I said to myself; with a faint heart you will never get through the Jackdaw, and as for cawing, that, like the chorister's song in the Witch of Berkeley, will "end in a quaver of consternation."

The room was decorated with evergreens, and in floral letters at the top of it was a line suggested by the schoolmaster, to this effect—

And listening senates on his accents hung.

The chair was taken by the Parson, who, after a few introductory words, said, that as he was more in the habit of looking at them and talking to them than any of his other friends who had to give recitations that evening, he would be the first to break the ice. So off he went with Gray's Elegy, through which his voice thrilled with most touching pathos.

He was followed by the gallant Volunteer, Lieutenant Brown, who appeared in full uniform, sword and all, the better to give a martial effect to his warlike words, which were Tennyson's Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaklava. My gracious, did not he mouth it! Great Mars himself and Hector of Troy could not have cut about them in any *mêlée* with more fearful emphasis than he did through that awful episode of the Crimean campaign.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them,
Volleyed and thundered

through his stentorian voice so that the room seemed to reverberate with the roll of artillery. I was so disgusted with him, yet I wished he had gone on for ever, for I knew when he had finished

my turn was come. The favour which Polyphemus proposed to do to Ulysses, namely to "eat him last," has little comfort in it after all, for the last will come. It is true I was only the penultimate penny-a-liner—the lawyer was actually to be the last; but after me might come the Deluge for aught I cared.

I arose with a confused head and a parched tongue. The awful anxiety depicted in my wife's face was something fearful to behold: the moment was big with the fate of the whole family, yet, like a brave woman, she rallied herself to give me a nod of encouragement, while the girls clapped their white gloves together, as their lips moved apparently to pronounce the words "Poor Papa." If it had not been for the groom and the gardener I do not think I could have begun. These fellows, with a noble fidelity which I shall remember with gratitude to the last day of my life, made a noise like a couple of Bedlamites. The groom had furnished himself with a big stick, and the gardener, in order to produce a novel effect in acoustics, had brought his rake. Uproar is contagious: the ὁι πολλοί resolved to have their share in the recitations, so they continued cheering "for the Doctor" until the doctor, under their invigorating influence, cheered up a little.

The tumult ceased: a dead pause followed. "Now, Doctor," says the Parson. "Go in and win," whispered the Attorney. I went in, but I did not win; it is just as well to confess it at once. No, in spite of all I could do, I started with a hideous conviction that I was cutting a ridiculous figure. I would have given anything for the Boanergian barefacedness of my friend Lieutenant Brown, but after his warlike hurly-burly my voice sounded thin. The jocose inflection I endeavoured to give it appeared to me ghastly. I had not got half way through the first verse before I felt disposed to run away; to leap from the platform and escape into outer darkness, but of course that was out of the question. I looked at my wife; she held down her head. I looked at the girls; they were nervously fingering their gloves. I looked at the parson. "Not so bad," he whispered in the first convenient pause; and if ever I felt disposed to murder a man it was our own venerable vicar, for his damningly faint praise. It was a critical moment, in which an encouraging word might have made all pass off successfully. Had he said "*capital*" in a good clear voice, I should have gone on and prospered; but as it was, it was certainly a very dead-alive business until I came to the famous fifth verse. Now or never, thought I. Here I must retrieve my fortune, or as a Penny Reader fall like Lucifer never to rise again.

How my face burns at this moment even to write about the blunder I made. Instead of the splendid hit I looked forward to in the third line—

Church, army, physic, law—

I pointed to the Parson right enough for the first; but indicated the Attorney when I came to the army, amidst great laughter, which caused such confusion to the unfortunate reciter that I put down Lieutenant Brown, amidst another roar, for physic; and ended by pointing with my forefinger in the direction of my own breast when I had to mention *law*.

How I was to acquit myself after this in the "caw" was not ascertained—was not to be known: for I never got so far: as at the mention of "the *law*" my wife fainted off, whether it was overcome with surprise at my having unknown to her changed my profession, or in a transport of admiration at her husband's success, I could not at the instant say, but the interruption saved the audience and me the famous caw passage, which I suspect would have gone off in a scream, or, like Macbeth's "Amen," stuck in my throat altogether.

My wife quickly recovered, but I did not resume my part in the readings. The Attorney came out strong in "Young Lochinvar," and with a vote of thanks to the Vicar for his kindness in taking the chair, "a most delightful entertainment," as the county paper called it, came to a close.

On my way home, my wife, noble woman, confessed to me she never fainted at all; but, with a woman's wit, she devised this little trick to prevent me going further, so profoundly impressed was she with the egregious breakdown I must perpetrate, if ever I were permitted to come to that confounded "caw."

Need I say I have never since taken any part in Penny Readings, and that I never see a Jackdaw or hear one without feeling very uncomfortable, and making a strong resolution, should I ever be rich enough to build a mansion, not to cultivate a rookery in connection with it.

An Extraordinary Cellar of Wine.

These are days when men so appreciate old wine and good wine, that even a man's chance of getting into the Town Council will turn on a bottle of Port, and the merits of '20 are discussed with more gôut than Magna Charta or the Bill of Rights. We have seen astounding prices given for ancient vintages, and the iron men of the North, as it were, drink molten gold from magnums. This, then, being the case, I am sure the *cognoscenti* in vinous matters will be very glad to hear of a most extraordinary cellar of wine, which I have lately been permitted to inspect.

There is in a maritime city in the West of England of solid and ancient repute, with which we are all well acquainted, an honest and elderly bachelor, unknown to fame and to the newspapers, though he sometimes appears in the latter, but always under anonymous designations or a vague initial as a donor to some quiet unshowy charity, or purpose. The old celibate lives comfortably and rather quaintly in a quiet but, so far as fashion is concerned, deserted part of the antique city of his birth. He has a competent but moderate private property, and, his habits being inexpensive, he is on that account comparatively rich, or perhaps I should rather say has annually, after his own expenditure, a tidy little surplus to bestow upon his brother and sister fellow-beings less fortunate in a worldly sense than himself.

My acquaintance with him is of recent date and of accidental forming. He was until a year or so ago a tolerably regular attendant at the Cathedral, and I sometimes sat on the same form—for he never entered a stall or a pew—with him. Thus it happened that a word or two passed between us as we floated slowly out with the rest of the congregation after morning service, and loitered a little by pillar and monument to hear the rolling organ, now whisper like the gentle wind, now swell like a gathering storm through the vaulted aisles. Until the middle of the last month, I had missed him from his accustomed form for a considerable time, and was glad to learn that absence from home, and not illness, was the reason for my not seeing him. As we emerged into the Green, an October wind was driving before it the sear leaves like a crowd of fugitive skeletons, rustling and scraping along the gravelled alleys of the Cathedral close, which gave my old neighbour an opportunity to display a little bit of scholarship, by alluding to the Homeric simile that compares the passing race of men to falling leaves. My own classical reading is scant enough, goodness knows; still it luckily happened by pure accident that I nearly scraped my way through the original quotation, which so won the heart of my acquaintance that he said, "I do not know whether you may be like myself a bachelor, but if you have no home engagement for to-day and will join me in an early dinner, I can give you a bit

of roast beef and Yorkshire pudding." Without at all disclosing family secrets, I may say that I happened to be just at the time living *en garçon*, so that I was able to accept the old gentleman's invitation, which I did with pleasure. I was anxious to see his ménage, how he lived, and what the interior of his cabin was like. I had a fancy that it must be quaint enough; and besides, roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, and a scraping of horse-radish round the dish were in themselves rather tempting. I seemed to sniff the savoury meal in the keen October wind, which blew down the walks of leafless limes and made me draw my great coat closer round me, while it ballooned the crinoline of many a fair Cathedral attendant, as like a ship in full sail she tacked with difficulty across the Green against the gale.

My host's domicile was just what I expected it to be. It was an old-fashioned substantial, wainscoted, wide-halled, black mahogany-bannistered house, in a part of the city which once held some magnates at high rents, but now afforded spacious accommodation at small cost to large families. The table was laid out for dinner, and a fire blazed up brightly from the spacious fire-place set round with blue and white glazed Dutch tiles that reflected and refracted and played, as it were, with the upleaping dancing flames from the Welsh coal. On two sides of the room were bookshelves, which I had time scarcely to scan (as I did not wish to seem impertinently curious) while my host went out to change his Sunday coat for a warm dressing-gown, bringing another for my accommodation, as he said "a man always enjoyed himself the more when he knew he was not rubbing the back out of his best coat." Well, on his bookshelves I saw some divinity—Barrow, South, and Tillotson; Richardson's Novels, Paradise Lost, and Buchan's Domestic Medicine. Over the chimney-piece was a full length portrait of George III. in walking costume, and under it was written, I suspect in mine host's hand, that famous stubborn saying of His Majesty, when they wanted him to consent to Catholic Emancipation, that "he could lay his head on the block, but could not violate his coronation oath, &c." Two early sketches of Bird's, and a couple of rather indifferent portraits in oil (I fancy the old gentleman's father and mother), completed the decorative furniture of the room. Two arm-chairs stood invitingly at either side of the fire-place, and the only other remarkable object in the apartment was a large brass-mounted dark walnut-wood chest of drawers, with an escritoire or writing-desk at the top.

We sat down to dinner, and a good glass of October beer washed down the roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, which came up hissing on the dish, and was transferred to thick delft hot plates of an old-fashioned substance that retained the heat. We had no wine at dinner, but when the cheese was removed he asked me what I drank. I had got it into my head that the old gentleman possessed a few dozen of uncommon fine port, bottled very likely by the original of the oil painting over our heads—something with a cobweb outside and a beeswing inside the bottle, so I frankly said I would take a glass of port. "Come, my friend," said he, "you shall draw it from the bin yourself."

Now there is nothing I prefer to going down into a long-standing well-furnished private wine cellar, and seeing the bulged ends of bottles (the "kicks-up" I think they are called) in little black circles, with a groundwork of yellow sawdust between; the brick partitions tufted with that purple fungus which accumulates from years of vinous deposit, and the dark cobwebs depending from the arched roof—altogether that cosy cavernous genial temperature, and "dim obscure" which the candle that you carry is just sufficient to dispel, and which any one who has descended into the lower regions of a warm old house is well acquainted with. Here, if anywhere, I thought, in the catacombs of this ancient town domicile I shall be able to see what a wine-cellar of the last century was like. What then was my surprise, when instead of ringing for a candle to be brought to him and producing some queer-shaped key, he took from his pocket a bunch of bright little ones, and walking up to the brass-mounted dark walnut-wood escritoire, unlocked the falling top, and showed me a number of drawers labelled, one with "Port," another with "Sherry," another with "Claret," another with "Madeira," &c., &c.

It was not merely the names of the wines which were on the drawers, but the quantities they were supposed to contain, date of vintage, price, &c. On one I read "4 dozen of '20 Port, 120 shillings": a second, "3 dozen of Lafitte Claret, 84 shillings": another, "5 dozen of Port, 48 shillings": another, 10 dozen of Sherry, 44 shillings," and so on. As may be supposed, I was puzzled at the spectacle. Hardly one of the drawers would have contained a pound of tea; yet here they professed to hold, the smallest of them, some dozens of wine.

"You said you would have port," said my host; "and as this is the first time I have had the pleasure of entertaining you, we cannot drink to our better acquaintance in anything less than a bottle of '20: let me see, 12 into 120 goes 10 times—ten shillings, that is five shillings a piece:" so saying he drew out the drawer, which was filled with silver, took from it four half-crowns, and placed two in my wine-glass and two in his own.

Seeing me look, as I might well do, puzzled and astonished, he said, "This is my wine-cellar. I keep it pretty well stocked; and as I have a little money to spare I replenish the bins as they get low. Whenever I want a bottle of wine, you see I have not far to go for it. The fact is, it is a whim of mine formed years ago. I had previously been fond of my wine in moderation and most days drew a cork for myself or a friend: it then suddenly struck me, in a hard dear winter, that when I had a good meal, and a good glass of beer, I may very well dispense with wine. But with means, and without a family, the money I should thus save would be of no use *to me;* so I conceived this little device of yearly laying in an imaginary stock of wine as previously, and drinking imaginary bottles as we shall to-day, always taking out the probable cost of each, and, instead of swallowing it in sips, giving it to those who may want. If I do not meet with a deserving object myself, I hand it over to the parson of the parish, or some other discreet person, who acts as my almoner."

Falling at once into the old gentleman's humour, I said "that is all very well for yourself, but how is your guest to manage his half of the bottle? How, for instance, am I to drink my share of the port?" and I pointed to the five shillings in the glass.

"Colston's motto," replied my friend, "Go and do thou likewise: surely around your neighbourhood you can find no difficulty in disposing of two half-crowns. I believe," he added, "that I have priced my '20 Port too low, judging from what I see from the papers is sometimes given for that vintage: but I cannot afford to give more than £6 per dozen for any wine, even in imagination. Indeed, I do not think it right: and this I only produce on rare occasions—for instance, when I have the pleasure of making the acquaintance of a friend like yourself."

I bowed in return for the compliment, and said, "Pray how do you regulate your own private tipple? on what principle, for instance?"

"No principle at all," he answered, "but according to whim and fancy; as I might take a liking, if I were still a wine drinker, to wit: on a cold day like this, with the wind piping against the window frame, I might say to myself—Well, I will just warm up a pint of Madeira, and sip it with a page of the quaint, classical, and silvery Jeremy Taylor after dinner. So I go to my desk and take out, say half-a-crown (draw my cork, as I call it), and dispose of it like the rest. With a friend, you perceive how I share a bottle of '20 Port. In summer, when I throw open the window, and look over the tops of the lilacs and listen to the birds chirping on the feathery sprays of my neighbour's birch tree yonder, the time and the balmy warmth are suggestive of a cool bottle of claret; so I say 'here goes for a pint of Lafitte;' and I draw the price and dispose of it ditto. Whenever I find any of the bins getting low I replenish it; and should I suddenly quit this world I have left directions that the cellar is to be handed over to the parson of the parish, to be employed by him as I have employed it. Thus, you see, it really costs me nothing to help other folks who have not small beer. I do not feel the outlay now any more than I did before. Only the same money is expended on my new cellar as on my old; my health is as good as ever, while I have just as much pleasure in drinking in fancy my wine after this old fashion as before, and, however much I may take on the present plan, I never have head-ache nor stomach-ache, nor"—

"Heart-ache my good friend, and here is to your continued happiness and health," I added, raising the glass with the two half-crowns in it to my lips, "and I drink it as sincerely as though I washed down the toast with Imperial Tokay."

Such is the story of this extraordinary cellar of wine, which, I hope, has not seriously disappointed anyone who has read through the narrative, at not having his curiosity more literally gratified.

The Bachelors of Frenchay.

Chapter I.

The main features of the following story I have had from two persons, who vouch for the truth of them, in so far that they heard them from those whom they believe to have been credible witnesses. Possibly, some aged person in the neighbourhood of Frenchay may be able to confirm or enlarge them, but he can hardly do so unless by hearsay, as it is nearly eighty years since the romantic circumstances, which I shall endeavour to narrate in my own way, occurred. I may add that one of my informants had the account from the late Mr. Richard Smith, surgeon, of Bristol, more than thirty years ago, when the latter said he quite well remembered as a lad the local excitement caused by the startling occurrence. It is noteworthy that the late W. M. Thackeray in *Denis Duval*—the story which he left unfinished at the time of his death, and which was published in its fragmentary form in the *Cornhill Magazine*—makes part of the plot of his tale turn on a somewhat similar incident to that which occurred in the case of the Frenchay Bachelors.

My informants having only a general recollection of the circumstances cannot fix the date exactly, but it will probably be somewhere between the years 1785 and 1790, when two fashionable young men came to reside in a house not far off Frenchay Common, and which I learn still stands, though I cannot say by whom it is now inhabited. They were fashionable young fellows, apparently of good breeding and family; and as they lived in some style and had an excellent address they were soon visited by the first families in the neighbourhood. They were extensively invited out, and saw the gentry of the county at their own house in return, where they entertained well. They were particularly remarkable for the large stud of high-bred horses which they kept, one of the great features of the house in which they lived being its spacious set of stables. In those days, as now, the country round about was hunted by packs belonging to the then Duke of Beaufort and Earl Berkeley. As both bachelors constantly attended the meets and rode very well, there was nothing very remarkable in their keeping a good stable full of blooded animals. Their neighbours, however, noticed that sometimes the two returned home very late in the evening with their horses apparently much distressed, though it was pretty well known there was no hunt that day anywhere in the vicinity. At times they were absent a whole day or a couple of days together, though when they left their house on horseback they apparently seemed equipped only for a ride of a few hours.

These circumstances, however, were only passingly noticed. No one pondered them; or (strange to say, for a gossiping village) pryed into their affairs, beyond attributing these eccentricities to the whim and caprice of two young men of fortune and family. It was enough for the neighbours that they kept a good establishment, entertained well, and were bachelors. Besides this, the Vernons (such we will suppose was the name they went by, being said to be brothers, though they were not at all alike) were handsome, well-dressed men; perhaps a little too stylish in their garments, sporting brighter colors and more lace than country gentlemen usually indulged in even in those days of excessive dress. There might, too, have been an expression about the eyes of both not always prepossessing—a determined, even severe and fierce flash at times: but the young ladies put all this down to high blood and spirits, and it was thought there were more than one or two of the handsome daughters of Gloucestershire squires in the vicinity, who would be only too happy were either of the Frenchay Bachelors to make them an offer.

One, indeed, there was (we will call her Maria Hayward) who was said to have captivated the elder of the two, and to be herself at the same time enamoured of the handsome stranger with the dark eyes. She had other admirers, however, and one of them, a young Newnham, son to a wealthy Bristol banker of that name, and brother to the Rev. Mr. Newnham, who so strangely lost his life at Pen Park Hole; but, being inferior in apparent personal qualities to the elder Vernon, it was considered that he had a rival too formidable to be displaced.

At the time the Hotwells were at the height of their fashion and popularity, Clifton being then unknown, except as a small suburban hamlet on the hill. To the balls and the festivities in the old Assembly Room, which has long been appropriated to other purposes, the gentry of the surrounding country and their families flocked, and the Bachelors of Frenchay were amongst the frequent and most noticeable attendants at these gay entertainments. And it was only natural to suppose that many a mother with marriageable daughters looked wistfully to young fellows of fashion and figure like the Vernons, whose style of living bespoke them men of good fortune and peculiarly eligible matches. If other young fellows of fashion, their contemporaries, did sometimes wonder "where the deuce the Vernons came from;" of what family and county they were; how, without any connections and friends, they selected Frenchay for their residence—dropping, as it were, from the clouds down into the house by the common—ladies were not so critical, and had not perhaps the same cause for jealousy that the men had, who rarely could get a chance of dancing with any belle of the evening when the Vernons were at the assemblies. It was enough for them that the latter paid their way handsomely, were munificent in all matters, and when the gentleman who let them the house asked for a reference they replied by giving a year's rent in advance.

Maria Hayward's parents, who were people of good position residing in Winterbourne parish, were probably not wholly

unconscious of certain polite attentions paid by the elder bachelor, Sydney Vernon, to their daughter; but as he had made no formal proposal they were not in a position to ask him for information as to his family connections, &c. Had they, however, been more quick of observation, they might have been led to suspect that Maria herself and the fashionable stranger were much nearer making an engagement for themselves than their friends fancied; while the residents at Oldbury-court in those days whispered that they more than once saw two persons walking through the thick and romantic woods by the Frome side, whose figures, even though at a distance, marvellously resembled those of Maria Hayward and the elder Vernon.

Thus matters stood when a ball of more than ordinary brilliancy —a bachelors' ball—was given at the Hotwells. All the fashionable world were there, and the two Vernons were not absent. Maria Hayward never looked better than on that evening. There was a flash of excitement in her eye and a flush on her cheek which became her, and she seemed for the first time careless about concealing her love for the elder Vernon. And, as he danced no less than four times during the evening with her, the significant attention did not fail to attract the notice of the company. She wore that night a bracelet glittering with gems of extraordinary brilliancy, which her friends had not noticed before in her possession, and which it afterwards came to be known was the gift of the elder of the two bachelors.

Her other old suitor, Newnham, was there also, but he had the penetration to see that matters had come to a pass when there was no hope for him; he therefore abstained from further paying attentions which he saw were not acceptable. Like a sensible fellow, he flung himself into the festivities of the evening, and did his best to forget his disappointment in the gaieties of the hour. In one of the dances he took his place with his fair partner close to Maria Hayward and Sydney Vernon, and, the better to conceal any appearance of chagrin, rattled on in gay conversation with his companion, telling her of his intended journey to London, on which he was to start soon after supper—a journey which he periodically made with a large amount of bills and money belonging to the banking firm of which he was a member.

"I wonder you are not afraid," said his partner, "of highwaymen." For that was the time of Paul Cliffords and cavaliers of the road.

"No danger:" said he lightly; "I have done the journey ten times already with such impunity that I begin to doubt the very existence of these gallant knights of the stand-and-deliver order."

"But supposing they did stop you and ask you to stand and deliver?" enquired his companion.

"Sydney," said Maria Hayward to her partner, in an earnest whisper, "are you asleep or spell-bound?" for the Bachelor of Frenchay, though it was his turn to advance in the dance, remained stationary and, as it almost seemed, intently listening to the conversation of the couple next to him. With a sudden flush Vernon recovered himself, and moved through his part, while Newnham

replied to his fair companion, "And supposing they did stop me, one always has a purse of loose coins to present to the fellows for their civilities. We bankers are only too happy to insure a large amount at so small a cost."

Before supper that night, Sydney Vernon hastily approached Maria Hayward, and saying that an old malady of giddiness, which sometimes attacked him in large assemblies owing to the heat of the room and the exertion of dancing, had come upon him, and that he must wish her good night, and get home while he could. Something more he whispered as he pressed her hand, but what that was she herself only heard. He added, however, as he was leaving, that he feared he could not see her to-morrow, as the illness usually confined him to the house for a day or two. After this, he left the room, accompanied by his younger brother Henry.

Chapter II.

Day was closing in when a chaise and four appeared on the high road which crosses the broad plain of Hounslow Heath. The occupant was John Newnham, the banker, and, as he was a cool collected fellow prepared, as we have seen, for any sudden incident of this noted highway, we can imagine he travelled without feeling any violent apprehensions of what might occur. It was well he had made up his mind for all accidents; as he was almost immediately aroused from his reverie by hearing the quick, dull beat of horses' feet on the turf. Looking out, he saw two mounted and armed men approach at a rapid gallop, one of whom called with an imperative voice to the driver to stop, and enforced his command by firing a pistol and sending a bullet whistling through the air over the man's head. The driver did not need a second word to bring the chaise to a stand-still, when one of the horsemen, both of whom wore black masks of crape on their faces, appeared at the carriage door, through which he held a long brass-barrelled pistol, pointed at the banker's head, and at the same time demanded his money. It was evident, from the promptitude with which Newnham handed him a pretty well filled purse, that the latter had already made up his mind how to act in the emergency. The highwayman took the proffered prize, saying, as he did, however, "The smallest contribution is thankfully received: but Bristol bankers do not usually travel so slenderly provided; so I shall thank you, sir, to hand me the little black trunk by your side."

"You have the advantage of me," coolly answered Newnham; "for while you apparently know me, I have not the honour of your acquaintance; but with a loaded pistol at my head, I suppose I must submit to my fate," and he handed to the highwayman the little black box also. The cavalier took it, and turning their horses' heads, he and his companion galloped swiftly over the heath, and were soon lost to sight in the deepening shadows of the night. Newnham then put his head out of the chaise window, and calling to the driver, told him to quicken his pace; "those fellows have lightened your load and mine, too, my man," said he, "so I think you will have no difficulty in getting over the ground at a round trot." "Humph," added he to himself after a short silence,

"I wish them joy of their booty. The Bristol man has contrived to keep his one eye open, otherwise it would be a poor business for the bank."

Newnham had the best of it after all; for he not only kept a loose purse ready for the occasion, but a box also, clenched with iron and filled with copper coins, which no doubt the highwaymen believed contained metal more attractive in the form of gold pieces. He chuckled to himself, and musingly said, "I think my ear was not quite a stranger to that voice." Whatever the secret was, however, he kept it to himself, and afterwards reached London without anything further occurring to call for observation.

Chapter III.

Four days after the event on Hounslow Heath, three horsemen rode up to the residence of the Bachelors at Frenchay. One of them enquired of the servant who answered them if either of his masters were at home, and on being informed that they had left the house only for a short time and were expected back every moment, the stranger said that as they were friends they would remain until either returned. They asked permission to put up their horses for a little, which was readily granted them, when they loitered for a few moments in the yard, and then appeared to stroll quite carelessly into the stables.

"You have some nice well-bred cattle here," said the spokesman of the party to Vernon's principal groom. "I call that a noble gelding," he added, pointing to a black horse, which though carefully dressed, appeared as though it had been recently very hardly ridden. The animal hearing voices turned its head round from the manger to look at the speakers, upon which one of the men glanced meaningly at the chief person of the party, who, in fact, was Newnham, and said, "A nice star that sir," alluding to the white irregular mark on the horse's forehead.

"Yes," answered Newnham, nodding, "the very same; I'd swear to it." Then turning round to Vernon's groom, who followed them into the stable, he carelessly observed, "this horse seems to have been doing a good deal of work lately."

"Yes, sir," replied the man, "master has been in Berkshire with him, and has had some hard days."

While they were yet speaking the younger Vernon entered the yard, and seemed for the moment disconcerted at the appearance of strangers. However he nodded to Newnham, with whom he had some acquaintance, and then asked them into the house, as the latter said they wished to speak to him. No sooner had Vernon entered the dining-room than the two men who were with Newnham seized him and handcuffed him. They were, in fact, London Bow Street officers whom the banker had brought with him, as, on consideration, he had little doubt that the voice of the foremost highwayman in the mask was that of the elder Vernon, while he noted that his companion rode a black horse with a white blaze on its forehead, which he thought he recognised as one he had seen Henry Vernon ride with the Beaufort and Berkeley hounds.

No sooner had the butler, who appeared to be a confidential servant, seen how his younger master was served, than he turned to quit the room. "Stop, my friend," exclaimed one of the Bow-street officers, producing a pistol and pointing it at him, "there is no use your trying that dodge with us. You cannot give the other bird notice to wing it; we bean't such fools as not to look after him as well as this 'ere young gentleman. I daresay his lover's walk is cut short by this time."

The younger Vernon, who, up to this moment, had kept silence, muttered a terrific oath and ground his teeth in impotent rage. He saw it was all up with him, and so it was. A scout had been sent out to Frenchay an hour or two before Newnham and his party reached the village, and had seen Sidney Vernon and Maria Hayward meet at a trysting place in a wooded dell of the Frome, just where that romantic little river makes a sudden bend towards the woods of Oldbury Court. He gave his employers intimation of this fact, and two men were despatched to head the lovers and lie in ambush for them where the thick leafy covert, close to a little pathway by the river side, enabled them to remain quite concealed until they could almost touch Vernon as he passed.

Experienced, however, as the officers were in such matters, they did not quite correctly calculate the acuteness of eye and ear possessed by cavaliers whose business is carried on when they require vision to pierce the darkness of night, and hearing to catch the first distant sounds of approaching horses and carriage wheels. A few steps ere the lovers had reached the spot where the men were hidden, Vernon, who before this was engaged in the deepest conversation with Maria, heard a slight rustle, which made him cast a rapid glance towards the place of concealment. The sound came from one of the men who was gently putting aside a branch, the better to enable him to spring at the bachelor as he passed. At the same moment, Vernon raised his hand towards the breast of his coat, and as the movement was noticed by the two men from their leafy hiding-place, they knew a moment was not to be lost: both sprang together towards him, and it was as well at least for one of them that they did not hesitate, and thus allow Vernon time to take aim. As it was, the pistol, which he pulled from his pocket and hastily fired, sent a ball through the beaver of the foremost officer. Even still, the bachelor might have escaped or made a bold fight for liberty, but that Maria, shocked at this extraordinary encounter, fell fainting on the pathway. Vernon turned his eye for a second, and put out his hand to catch her as they were close by the river, and in so doing gave his captors an advantage which they instantly availed themselves of. The two, who were powerful men, threw themselves on him, when seeing there apparently was no use of further resistance he submitted to be disarmed, merely requesting, as they secured his wrists with handcuffs, that one would assist the lady. But there was no need of this: the pistol shot had attracted to the spot a servant from the Court, who happened to be at some little distance, and he promptly summoned help to Miss Hayward, who was known to the family, while the officers conducted their prisoner back to Frenchay.

When the elder brother on entering the house saw Newnham his countenance changed for a second. Then, recovering himself, he said, "I suppose, sir, this is your mode of entering the lists with a rival in love? A notable plot, forsooth, for the gratification of disappointed gallantry, but you shall answer for it."

"It is probable," replied Newnham, "that you will first have to answer for something yourself on which you will not find it quite so easy to satisfy twelve of your countrymen. I confess myself worsted by you in the field of love; but it is to be hoped you did not carry on your suit as you did your profession—in disguise." And so speaking, the Bristol banker held up a couple of crape masks, which, with other properties necessary for the better transaction of business on the highway, were found concealed in the house.

The sequel of the story may be anticipated; the bachelors (who really were young fellows of good family and had taken to this wild mode of life) were tried and convicted of stopping on the highway and robbing John Newnham, banker, of Bristol, who swore distinctly to the voice of one of the men, and to the horse ridden by the other. A chain of corroborative evidence was also adduced, which placed their guilt beyond a doubt. Just as morning was breaking on the day of their capture a man, who was sent for a doctor, saw the two Vernons arrive at their house on horseback, themselves dusty and their horses much distressed. Two men, answering their description, were also traced at several points along the road between the distant scene of the robbery and their residence at Frenchay: and, to crown all, some articles of jewellery, which probably they waited an opportunity to dispose of, and which were identified as the property of persons who had been stopped by two horsemen on the highway, were found on the premises.

An alibi was attempted to be established for the prisoners, but it failed, and the lives of both were forfeited to the law.

Almost immediately after this extraordinary event the Haywards left that part of the country to reside abroad. Maria's brilliant bracelet that she wore at the bachelors' ball was sent by her parents to the Crown prosecutor, when it was identified as belonging to the Countess of C——, who, with her husband the Earl, had been stopped in their carriage on the Heath by a couple of well-mounted men in masks, and made to deliver not merely their purses but the other valuables they had about them. In a moment of infatuated passion the elder Vernon, who, no doubt of it, was deeply attached to Maria Hayward, presented her with the ornament which might at any moment have led to his discovery. Maria herself was said to have received such a shock that her reason at times was slightly affected, and she died abroad some few years after the strange events which I have (I admit with a slight colouring) endeavoured to relate, but the main points of which are founded on facts, that I have had from two credible sources.

Richard Smith used to say that the house at Frenchay where the bachelors lived had been pointed out to him as a boy; but the owner of it need not be under any apprehension that my story will cause his property to be named "The Highwayman's Box," as I myself have not the means of identifying it.

Two Bristol Mediciners and Memorialists.

I have at times thought that one with leisure and opportunity might find out and write something interesting on the medical annals of Bristol. Its ecclesiastical and commercial history has been amply illustrated. We know how its mitred priests and merchant princes lived and where they lived, for we are still rich in the monastic and domestic architecture of the Middle Ages; but what old physicians it had, what they did towards increasing or diminishing the population of the place in the different ages in which they flourished, we do not know—certainly I do not know. Yet doubtless, considering the size and importance of the city, the healing art in old times must have had some learned professors amongst its local practitioners. Without going further into the subject, however, which I candidly confess I have not the means of doing, I have been struck with the curious coincidence that the two principal memorialists, or at least topographers, of Bristol were mediciners or belonged to the medical profession. Those were William Botoner, better known as William of Wycestre, and William Barrett.

Nearly four hundred years intervened between the two worthies—between the time that the former cultivated a garden of medicinal herbs by the gateway of St. Philip's Church (where he lived and practised physic) and the time when the latter screwed his brass plate, inscribed with "William Barrett, Surgeon," on the house in St. Augustine's Parade, formerly occupied by Messrs. Chillcott. Nevertheless, I fancy there was something in common between the dispositions of the two old Bristol physickers and topographers: something even of similarity in their histories. Certes, they were alike in the loving minuteness with which they loitered around the antiquarian points of interest in the old city—the loving curiosity with which they pryed into every feature of its ancient and monumental buildings, walking about Bristol as the Psalmist would have us walk about Sion, marking well her bulwarks, and telling the towers thereof, while setting down their measurements and their beauties for the information of after-ages.

In an old *Quarterly Review* and a pleasant paper, entitled "Travelling in England," we have a short notice of our friend Botoner:—

"The most ancient notes of a traveller in England which remain to us (says the Reviewer) are those of William Botoner, better known as William of Worcester, who (notwithstanding his name which he inherited from his father) was born in Bristol about the year 1415. He was educated at Oxford, mainly at the expense of Sir John Falstoff, of Caistor, in Norfolk, whose squire he afterwards became, and whose life he wrote. Some specimens of his correspondence with Sir John Falstoff occur among the Paston Letters. His 'Itinerary' is preserved in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and was printed in 1778. It contains notes of his pilgrimage from Ware, in Hertfordshire, to St. Michael's Mount, in Cornwall, and of various other journeys in the South of

England: descriptions of Bristol and the adjoining country; scraps about the Falstoffs and their Castle; and various historical notes inserted almost at random. The whole is very brief and confused; but besides the especial interest belonging to any work of a learned layman in the fifteenth century, the 'Itinerary' preserves dimensions and measurements of churches, castles, and other buildings, the value of which has long been recognised by archæologists. It is not easy to discover even a hint of the picturesque in William of Worcester: yet we follow with some curiosity the record of his ten days' ride from Ware to the great Cornish shrine, and those at least who know the country are pleased to learn how 'jentavit'—he breakfasted—among the Canons of Crediton, and then proceeded by rough roads (a day's journey, although little more than fifteen miles—so that we must suppose the Bordeaux of the Canons to have been unusually attractive) to Oakhampton, where he found shelter in the stronghold of the Courtenays, the ruined walls of which still hang so picturesquely over the mountain stream. From Oakhampton Master William journeyed over 'le moore vocat Dertmore,' to the great hall of the Benedictines at Tavistock, where, if the annals of the house speak true, he was sure to find good venison of the red-deer, and no lack of its necessary accompaniments. It is this progress from college to castle, and from castle to monastery, which gives such a marked distinction to William's 'Itinerary,' and to that of his successor, Leland. Both travellers show us something of the true old England; although great changes had taken place between the time of William's journeys, made just before the outbreak of the Wars of the Roses, and those of Leland, when the storm had already broken over the great religious houses."

This is a scanty biography, yet it is pretty well all we know of the earliest English topographer, who was born in our St. James's Back, "of parents not *ex equestri ordine*, as Tanner saith, but tradesmen, whitawers, skinners, and glovers." We are reminded by a late annalist that St. James's Back at the time of William of Wycestre was "almost wholly occupied as open garden ground to the few houses of the opulent who were located in that neighbourhood; and whose casements looked over the Broad Meads that stretched away eastward, and refreshed the eye of young Master Botoner with their greenness, or tempted him forth a cowsliping." Passing along the Back any evening, as he makes his way from Nelson Street into St. James's Churchyard, the reader can amuse himself realising, if possible, Mr. Pryce's fancy picture of the locality in the early part of the 15th century.

The Quarterly Reviewer omits one or two little facts in connection with W. of Wycestre which Barrett inserts in the almost equally brief account which he gives of his prototype. Botoner, it is believed, was the first to translate any of Cicero's works into English. The treatise on "Old Age" *(De Senectute)* he presented to William de Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester, but he complains that he received no return or acknowledgment—*nullum regardum recipi de episcopo*—a delightful little characteristic grumble, which shows how human nature and learned patronage have been pretty much the same in all ages of the world. "It is not at all uncommon for authors, especially translators," mildly adds Barrett, "to go unrewarded." The gentle Bristol surgeon could not for the life of him say anything sharper He was no slasher or sensationalist writer, Heaven bless his memory!

Wycestre's manuscript, which has since been a guide to so many antiquarians, was nothing more than a commonplace or pocket-

book, which he carried with him in his wanderings, pulling it out and dotting down rude notes and measurements of the places he visited and examined. When discovered in the Benet College Library, Cambridge, the characters in the worn and well-thumbed pages were so indistinct and difficult that, the entries being almost wholly in Latin, it was as hard to decipher as though it had been a roll of papyrus filled with hieroglyphics. Nevertheless the tedious task was executed by the ingenious Mr. Nasymth, who published the book in 1778. "Wycestre," says Barrett, "is particular in description of the churches, the streets, the religious houses, &c., of his native city, though little taste in architecture is displayed, and often nothing but their measurement by steps *(gressus)* given, without any order observed, but things are noted down as they occur." Nevertheless, there is at times, in spite of all that may be said to the contrary, a graphic reality in his entries. For instance, when describing the boundaries of the old castle, he says, "you go on *marching* by the wall of the ditch, of the walls of the Castle through Newgate, and along the street called the Weer and over Weer bridge, leaving the watering place on the left hand, and making a circuit by the wall of the Castle ditch towards the South near the Cross in the Old Market," and plodding on, the old fellow concludes his rounds by observing, "the whole circuit contains 2,100 steps." Do you not see, in your mind's eye, the gossiping old physicker trudging his lonely round of those wide ramparts, mentally counting step after step as he marches along, to use his own words? his "step" by the way being somewhere about twenty-one or twenty-two inches. The good old note-taker used no measuring chain or tape measure; he had not even his walking-stick notched out into feet or *pedes*, but with his own stout legs he took the dimensions, and when he had "stepped" north and south, east and west, he put his hand in his broad cloth doublet, pulled out his pocket book, and, like Captain Cuttle, "made a note on it." He picked up some information also from others as he went along, jotting by the way. Thus he says, speaking in English of "the quantite of the dongeon of the Castell of Bristol," that he had the dimensions "after the informatione of . . Porter of the Castell;" from which we may presume that Master Botoner was unable to obtain admission or did not care to ask for it to that gloomy feudal apartment: so was content with the measurement second-hand from the porter, as he paid the man a gossiping visit in the lodge, and perhaps stood something handsome in the shape of a treat. Another instance of his exactness as to length and breadth may be taken as a sample of whole pages of his Itinerary. Speaking of the hall of the Castle, he says, "The length of it is 36 yards, or 52 steps; the breadth of the hall is 18 yards or 26 steps; and the height of the walls outside the hall is fourteen feet, *as I measured them.*" One extract more, and I have done with the old topographer's jottings: it is a sly little poke at the parsons, as we should say in our days. Speaking of the Castle Chapel of the outer ward, he says, "It is dedicated to the honour of St. Martin, but in devotion to Saint John the Baptist, a monk of St James ought to celebrate the office every day, but he does it but Sunday,

Wednesday, and Friday." 'Tis clear Master Botoner thought the Friar was shirking his duty.

With that instinctive yearning for old and well remembered locality, which comes back to most men in the evening of life, William of Wyrcester on the death of his patron, returned to his native place. Possibly the parental abode in St. James's Back had become the property of another, or did not suit his new circumstances, since we find he started as physician and herbalist in a tenement by St. Philip's Gate. It was no new calling, for he was medical adviser as well as secretary and executor of Sir John Falstoff. A peaceful and pleasant mode of life, too, it must have been, this culling of simples—out in the morning in his garden gathering rosemary and mint and rue and sassafras when St. Philip's bells were ringing for matins, and sauntering there again in the dowy eve when these same bells called to vespers. I hold it to be not a little characteristic of the old topographer's mental tranquillity and happy disposition that he should have selected for his first subject of translation Cicero's treatise on "Old Age," which is so soothing and sweetly philosophic for those who are declining in days. The good old herbalist lived to be seventy, reaching exactly the time when another great lover of gardens and gardening, Sir William Temple, seemed to think most men should die—should say their *Nunc Dimittis*. "I knew and esteemed a person abroad," wrote Sir William, "who used to say a man must be a mean wretch who desired to live after three score years old: but so much I doubt is certain," continues the illustrious diplomatist, "that in life as in wine, he that will drink it good, must not draw it to the dregs." Nevertheless he also gives us the cheerful side of a lengthened life; "Socrates used to say that it was pleasant to grow old with good health and a good friend, and he might have reason; a man might be content to live while he is no trouble to himself or his friends; but after that, it is hard if he be not content to die."

I conclude Botoner enjoyed life to the last; varying the duties of his profession with walks through the city, dotting down the dimensions and descriptions of its ancient buildings, with now and again a week's holiday, for an excursion in the country from castle to castle and monastery to monastery.

Thus, too, it was with William Barrett as with William Botoner. The second Bristol topographer found time and leisure even amidst the calls of a good practice to make himself acquainted with all our venerable churches and historic buildings—hunting up old manuscripts, reading old charters. And though there were many richer men doubtless than he, I question if there was one that was more happy, when on a summer's evening, having seen all his patients and sent out all his physic, he sat down in his little parlour on St. Augustine's Back to arrange the materials of his future history. If he loitered in his literary labour he tells us he was quickened to diligence by the admonition of a friend who urged him to make haste with his book, and said "*Habe ante oculos mortalitatem.*"

Barrett spent the last years of his life in a peaceful, rural retreat near Wraxall, in a house afterwards occupied by a family named

Homer, and where, like Botoner, he prescribed for the poor, but unlike him, was fortunate in being able to prepare his jottings in a collected form for the press. I know few things in a small way more affecting than the passing notice which Barrett gives of his wife's tomb in St. Mary Redcliff. She died when comparatively young, "quietly fell asleep," as he says himself in the epitaph which is very fair Latin.

Written at a time when the style of mortuary memorials was fulsome and inflated, it presents in its simplicity and natural affection, a refreshing contrast to what we read on the sculptured tablets of the period. In his enumeration of the monuments of Redcliff Church, given in his own history, he glances aside to notice this one to him associated with so much that was sad and sweet in memory. He directs the attention of the reader or visitor to it in but few words: they are, however, touching for their brevity, and seem to come from him with a suppressed sigh. I can almost see the widowred and harmless old man as, pencil in hand, he makes the inventory of the adjacent monuments, turn towards this with half averted look, as a tear falls from an eye dimmed with age on the note-book in his hand. It is to the "memory of one," he says, "who justly deserved the character here given her by her husband; she was taken from him in early life. Eheu, dies atro carbone notanda." From the day "to be noted with a black mark," to the time he was making this note in his history, more than a quarter of a century had elapsed, and the aged historian doubtless looked back, as it were but yesterday, on that 8th of May, 1763, when in the 32nd year of her age, she "calmly fell asleep in the Lord without a sigh," (placide obdormivit) leaving four daughters and a little son to be cared for by the simple-hearted surgeon, who probably from his studious and antiquarian habits was better calculated to look after ancient coats of arms than the clothes of a young family. The inscription is, of course, in Latin; poor Barrett was too fond of the dead language to employ a living one, where he could legitimately use the tongue in which Virgil and Livy wrote. He begins—

Mariæ charissimæ conjugi
Gulielmi Barrett, chirurgi—

and then goes on to tell of that suavity of manner, that simplicity of life, that benevolence of soul, and that eminent piety which made her dear to all who knew her, and bound her husband to her by the sweet chain of love: he tells us too how she wasted away, the victim of consumption, and bearing her malady with Christian fortitude. Her maiden name was Tandy and she was of a respectable Wiltshire family.

It is a pity we do not know more of the personal history of our local historian, who if he has put together his book crudely and in a somewhat undigested shape, has yet shown himself a most painstaking and patient chronicler, and has collected in that awkward old quarto of his much valuable topographical information and ancient records, abundant material out of which a more expert and graphic writer might, with little trouble to himself, compile a pleasant useful and even picturesque history of our ancient and, in

spite of all its faults, dear old city. Possibly some of our local collectors may be in possession of scraps illustrative of the private life of the Bristol surgeon, who gave up so much of his time and spent some of his own money in searching out, selecting and condensing the mass of ancient authorities which he must have consulted and digested in making his volume. At present, however, as far as I can see, we have only the few particulars of the man that may be gleaned from occasional references in the history he has written, and incidental allusions to him which occur in the memorials and lives of Chatterton. And from his conduct to that wayward, proud, and impracticable boy, we can see he was a man of natural kindness, and with a dash of pedantry and studious absence of mind did not want for benevolent good sense, judging from the way in which he spoke to the youth when his master, Lambert, showed him the letter the former had left for Mr. Clayfield, and in which he intimated his intention of committing suicide. Sending immediately for Chatterton, Barrett says he "questioned him closely upon the occasion in a tender and friendly manner." Next day the young poet wrote Barrett the letter with which the readers of his life are so well acquainted. One thing may be noticed in it, that Chatterton does not treat the kind surgeon with the same malapert style that he always employs in speaking or writing of his other local patron, old Catcott, the pewterer. Chatterton with all his faults had great penetration, and doubtless saw more to respect and admire in the simple-hearted Barrett than in the conceited Catcott; for we are sure to none but to one of whose kindness and worth he was convinced would he have made the painful confession which he does in this letter—"No! it is my pride, my damned native unconquerable pride, that plunges me into distraction."

That Barrett did not continue to physic and bleed his fellow-citizens up to the time of his death we learn from a passage in the preface of his history. "Retiring from business into the country," he says, "and often confined by the gout, he thought he should find some amusement in this literary employ, and resumed the long intermitted task, that he might leave it in a less unfinished state to be completed and published hereafter." One thing we know, that it was in his rustic retreat he finished and printed the history of Bristol. A far greater historian turned the leisure of a country life to the production of his greatest work. Machiavelli, when forced by the stress of politics at Florence to betake himself to his paternal farm, recreated himself in writing "The Prince," when not chopping wood, pruning apple-trees, or hoeing turnips. The idea of writing the History of Bristol occurred to Barrett twenty years before he produced the work, and he then collected most of the materials, and made some progress, he tells us, in compiling it, and even had the copper plates engraved for the book in folio (as we may perceive from most of them having to be folded into the quarto); but, he adds, that being engaged in business, which commanded his time and attention, and receiving no encouragement to proceed, he sat down contented with his first loss, and desisted from the undertaking, intending to leave it to one of more leisure,

and to a time more auspicious and favourable to the undertaking. The worthy surgeon was doubtless as cross as one of his placid nature could be at having to put aside his papers and his darling task, so he grumbled about losing his labour and his oil *(oleum et operam)*. After quitting business, however, and taking down his brass plate, and getting comfortable in his country cot, where he could no longer be disturbed by that horrid "night-bell," and did not go to bed with the apprehension that his first sleep would be broken by the tintinnabular summons, when putting his head out of the window, the messenger on the flag-way below informed him that Mrs. ——, was in a state more interesting than comfortable, and required his instant and obstetric aid,—Then, I say, like the soldier tired of war's alarms, Barrett, tired of professional summonses, welcomed no doubt with pleasure the ease and quiet of his country life; and having arranged his books and papers on their new shelves, recovered in its full force his love for the abandoned work. Even then, perhaps, he would not have persevered, but, as he tells us, at the time "a worthy doctor of one of our universities, deservedly esteemed by all for his singular humanity and friendly disposition, visited him and warmly solicited him to proceed with the work and publish it himself in his life-time." The worthy doctor wrote to his Bristol acquaintance in Latin. Two such learned pundits of course would not condescend to anything so common-place as English in their communications. Barrett gives us a scrap of the letter, wherein the University doctor, like a flattering old rogue, affectionately scolds the Bristol surgeon on being a hard and cruel man to keep so distinguished a work so long from the public, and after a few more honeyed phrases, clinches all by giving him an injunction to consider how brief and uncertain was life. *Habe ante oculos mortalitatem.*

This sentence, Barrett tells us, made an impression irresistible applied to one in a declining state of health and years. In a word, the volume was immediately resumed, and prosecuted without interruption, and then offered to the public, who liberally patronised it. The history was printed in 1789.

I really do think that both Botoner and Barrett, as two Bristol memorialists and medical practitioners, deserve some little monumental recognition of their peaceful literary and professional lives, and the pains they took as topographers to perpetuate the architectural features and ancient fame of our old town.

By the way, there was another Bristol practitioner—but he was in our own day — who was a great dabbler in local history and antiquities, Richard Smith, or "Dick Smith" as men were wont to call him. The pages of the *Bristol Mirror* bear ample testimony to his talent in this respect, and for nearly two score years, I think, he regularly wrote the newsman's Christmas verses for that paper. The writer of this notice remembers that almost the last occasion when he saw and spoke to Mr. Smith, the latter presented him with a printed copy of his illustrated history, in rhyme, of "The dreadful tragedy of Sir Dinely Goodyer," literally bound in *boards*, made out of a piece of the gibbet on which the murderer was hung in chains at the Swash.

William Barrett,

THE BRISTOL HISTORIAN.

We are happy to say that the foregoing paper, scanty in materials though it was, has fortunately elicited from the surviving relatives of the historian rather full and really interesting particulars of the man, which our readers, we are sure, will thank us for being the means of procuring and placing before them. We have, at the same time, to thank those of Mr. Barrett's relations who have kindly lent their aid in the collection of the materials furnished in the following; which is mainly supplied to us from the pen of a lady, a descendant of the family of Mrs. Barrett, the latter having been a Bristolian, daughter of a Mr Tandy, sugar-baker of some eminence in the last century, and residing in Thomas Street :—

William Barrett, surgeon, F.S.A., was born about the year 1735, at Chippenham, or the adjoining village, Notton ; of his parents we know nothing, save that they died when he was very young, leaving another son, an infant, named Anthony. William and Anthony appear to have been comfortably provided for, and were placed under the care of kind guardians. The first steps in learning were made by the youthful William under the care of the schoolmaster of his native place, whose name was Bull ; this worthy held his school in the porch or vestry of the church, and from his pupil having to repeat his lessons in a very loud voice, the villagers, on passing, used frequently to exclaim, "Hark'ee, there's Bull and Barrett up at zaye." Barrett made such rapid progress in the classics, that his master rested not until he had persuaded his guardians to send him to Winchester. Mr. Barrett used frequently to relate with great glee his introduction to that public School. "Being very young and little, upon his going into the schoolroom, the master called him up, and asked him what he could read. 'Homer,' was the answer. 'You read Homer!' was the astonished reply; and forthwith a book was given him, when, to the amazement of the enquirer and mirth of the boys, the little fellow began to shout forth the lesson in the same loud key he had been accustomed to in the church porch." The surprise of the master, and peals of laughter of the boys, he never forgot.

At Winchester he made a lasting friendship with John Tandy, the son of a Bristol sugar-baker, and frequently passed holidays at his home in Thomas-street. As he advanced to manhood, he fell in love with Mary Tandy, his friend's younger sister, and as soon as he had been admitted a surgeon he married her, settling in Broad Street. With a comfortable income of his own and a goodly portion with his wife, Barrett had not, like many of his brethren, to struggle through poverty upwards: being very skilful, too, he soon gained a first-rate practice, and the next thing we find him doing is moving to St. Augustine's Back (the house occupied by Messrs. Chilcott at the corner of Host Street): there being no houses then on the Quay, the gardens reached to the river, and it was considered a pleasant and fashionable situation. With constant calls on his time from his profession, Barrett gave much of his

nights to the study of Holy Scripture in the original language, and antiquarian researches. It is remembered by his family that, if ever called up in the night, when he returned home, he never retired to rest, but spent the remaining hours with his books In 1763, amidst every temporal blessing, the great sorrow of his life took place : the wife of his youth sickened, and, in spite of every earthly care, died of consumption after giving birth to her fifth child, Sophia.

Of Mrs. Barrett we say little : her husband's beautiful epitaph on her speaks for itself, and his future life bore testimony to her lasting influence. He buried her with her own forefathers in Redcliff Church, and doubtless felt the old building was now doubly dear when holding that which was to him the most precious of earth.

Barrett was not a man to sit down despondingly under affliction; it rather quickened his energies and urged him out of self into deeper study of his favourite objects. Committing the care of his house to a Mrs. Trappel, a distant relative of his own, and the superintendence of his young children to his mother-in-law, Mrs Tandy, he became more devoted to the city of which he had become an adopted son, and determined to write its history. In this he was greatly influenced by a learned friend, Dr. Glyn (the author of the poem, "The Last Day"). Increasing practice, however, gave him little opportunity of carrying out his desire, and much of the spare time he had was given to the teaching of his youngest child, Sophia, who appeared to have a larger claim on his love from having never known her mother's. He taught her Latin, and began Greek with her also, and found she was as willing to receive instruction as he to communicate it. About 1784 he came to the determination of retiring from his profession. Frequent attacks of gout probably assisted him in his resolution, and his two kind relatives having died, his eldest daughter, Susannah, took the head of his household at his country house at Wraxall, which he had bought a few years before (the house that the late Mr. Homer re-built and lived in so many years). Here surrounded by books, children and friends, he gave up himself to the real enjoyment of his life, "close study," only attending the poor of the village, whom he denominated "God Almighty's patients" He published his history of Bristol in 1789, and then began with some friends to translate the Old Testament from the Hebrew. Many sermons that he wrote for his son, now in possession of Mrs. Barrett's family, are quaint and original.

But in the midst of his agreeable pursuits, severe suffering in his head came on with a swelling on one of his eyebrows. One morning after a distressing night he called for a mirror, and carefully examined the enlargement. He then told his daughters that it was a carbuncle and that in forty-eight hours he should be no more. Barrett's words were verified and he died about the time he had mentioned to his children. His death took place in September, 1789, at Wraxall, and his age must have been about 55. He was buried at Higham, in Somersetshire, in the Church of which his only son was the rector.

Miss Sophia Barrett, Mr. Barrett's youngest daughter, lived for

many years with her nephew Dr. Gapper, now Southby, at the Abbey Gate House, College Green, Bristol. Dr. Southby is the eldest surviving grandson of Mr. Barrett. He took to the name of Southby in 1835, on the deaths of Miss Southby and Lady Pollen, being their heir-at-law.

From another of his descendants, we learn that there is still extant, and in the possession of the writer, a large interleaved Testament of his, full of his writing, and with a Latin inscription on the first page, to the effect that, "On the 1st day of August, 1784, he began to read through the books of the New Testament in the order in which they are placed; and which, he was ashamed to say, he had not found leisure to do in the whole of his life, while turning through so many other volumes." He also gives the dates on which he began the different books, the last being August, 1787, at Wraxall, "where I then (he adds) fixed my residence" (ubi tunc habitationem fixi). "Omnia te Textus, si sapis, ipse docet;" and at the foot of the page—

"Forsan hæc olim meminisse juvabit."

We are also indebted to Miss Homer, of Wraxall (whose family purchased the historian's residence after his death, and who still (1860) reside in it), for some pleasing particulars of the amiable and learned Historian, while living in that village. From the memoranda kindly furnished by that lady, we collect the following:

Barrett bought the house at Wraxall, with the land attached to it in 1766, of Samuel King, Esq. I have by me an attested copy of his will, dated 1787, in which, after disposing of his property, he charges his son, the Rev. William Tandy Barrett, rector of Higham, and his son-in-law, the Rev. Edmund Gapper, rector of Kington Mansfield (both in the county of Somerset), to finish, transcribe, and publish his History of Bristol, in the "reasonable size of one large quarto" (however he lived to complete it himself). The last clause in the will is, perhaps, characteristic, and I will copy it. "Lastly (he says), I desire that when I shall happen to die, my body be rolled in an old blanket, and put in a common shell or coffin, and that it be buried in any churchyard nearest and adjoining, and carried to the grave by six of the poor men of the parish, who shall receive 5s. each, and a crape hatband each, for their labour, and a large flat stone only be put over the grave, inscribed with my name."—I know not in what year he (Barrett) died, but I find my grandfather (Thomas Gee, Esq.), bought the estate of his representatives in 1790. He left at his death a son, Rev. W. T. Barrett, and four daughters, Mary, wife of Rev. E. Gapper, and Susan, Ann, and Sophia, single.

An old woman still living here remembers Mr. B. well, as a kind elderly man in a cocked hat, with a pleasant word for everybody and especially for the children, whose heads he used to pat when they made their little bows and curtsies to him. She also recollects his attending her mother on one occasion and refusing to take any fee, because he said she was poor and worked hard—she remembers seeing him walk down the road with (she thinks) a viper in his hand, which he had detected in the act of destroying a poor toad, and whose life he thus saved. She tells too of his building a cottage (still standing) for a poor woman who washed at his house and allowing her to pay for it by her work. Perhaps I ought to say (adds Miss Homer) that this house was much smaller than at present, when he lived in it, but nevertheless a great part of the old building still remains. I find, however, he owned the advowson of the living of Higham, a house on St. Augustine Back, Aldridge's twine-yard, Great Garden, and other property at the time he made his will. A cabinet of coins, pictures, &c., and a library of books alluded to in the codicil seem to bespeak him a man of taste and education.

The Two Bristol Candidates.

"It is difficult to grow old gracefully," said Madame de Stäel. And so it is; for when infirmities will not allow you to descend the hill pleasantly, there are also querulousness against the present and an extravagant admiration of the past, which make croaking time often commence at three score years and ten. Old Cruger, however, I should say, had learned, or more probably possessed from nature, the faculty which the sententious French lady thought so hard to be acquired. Red Cruger, I mean—Cruger, Burke's colleague—who said, if he really ever did say, that famous speech, "Ditto to Mr. Burke:" though like many other historical sayings, the unreality of which have been exposed by Monsieur Fournier, possibly this famous apophthegm too will some day be discovered to be mythical *

They were grand and jolly old times for High-street, when it furnished within a few doors of one another two men engaged in trade able to go forth and contest the Parliamentary representation of Bristol. And this, too, when a contest was no child's play, merely costing three or four thousand pounds at the utmost and lasting only one day—*aut cita mors, aut læta victoria:* but a fight of fourteen days around the booths in Queen-square, when a waggon-load of satin favours was the least each candidate had to contribute. Such were the ordinary preliminaries through which a man approached senatorial honours at the close of the last century.

Nevertheless, Matthew Brickdale, woollen draper, and Henry Cruger, general merchant, it would seem, thought the luxury worth the money. Red Cruger was a handsome man, and Samuel Peach, the founder of the Tockington family and a wealthy huckaback or linen merchant living in Mary-le-port Street, had an only daughter who thought so too: for she fell in love with him, and married him. And, more than that, his father-in-law was almost as fond of the fine, fresh, upstanding Cruger; as he opened his purse to him, and paid his way through one of the hardest-fought battles the city has known, allowing himself to be put forward as fourth candidate in order to prevent the second votes going to Cruger's competitor.

Well! we have heard over and over again of those giant fights, for they were all giant fights in those money-no-object days. Both men at one time or another gained the honours they earnestly coveted; but they lost their fortunes, though not perhaps wholly through contested elections. Matthew Brickdale lived long enough

* The speech as recorded is the truth, but not the whole truth. Cruger said, "Ditto to Mr. Burke," but he also said more; for his whole address occupies fifteen lines, as reported in *Felix Farley* of that day.

to see all his means vanish, and he himself a pensioner on his own son, who was Collector or Comptroller of Customs Not long ago there were some still living who remembered the old man when he took his daily seat in the Long Room in Queen Square, that he might gossip with the people who came in to pay duties. This gossiping was the last pleasure left him, for when he was eighty he would be wheeled under the trees, and hail any one whom he knew as they hurried by on business. Sometimes, too, he would have himself pulled up into High Street, to see how the shop fronts were altered, and how the houses themselves there had changed their tenants since he retailed sarsanet and sad-coloured cloth at No. 21.

His competitor Cruger, who was born in New York when the future United States were still a colony to old England, retired after all his electioneering fights, a good deal broken in circumstances and health, to his early Transatlantic home, leaving his young son behind him to take his grandfather's name, inherit his grandfather's fortune, and marry one of his daughters to Mr. P. J. Miles, of Leigh Court.

And this brings me to what I began with, namely, the gracefulness of Cruger's old age, as exemplified in a letter which he addressed a year or two before his death to his old rival for Parliamentary honours, Matthew Brickdale. They both had then long been done with the world—or at least with the passionate political world in which they at one time played no inconsiderable part — and therefore able to look back on the vanity of human wishes, and the vanity of human riches too, both having left them. Cruger's letter to Brickdale was addressed from New York shortly before both the contemporaries of Burke closed their connection with this lower world, and thus he wrote :—

> My dear Friend,—Though in a far land, I learn with satisfaction from those who have seen you that you are still alive and in the enjoyment of tolerable health. I am also, thank God, for my time of life, well. To us, from whom the world, so far as its ambition and cares are concerned, has passed away, and who can look back upon different scenes, a serene passage through the brief space remaining to us is all we can hope for, and God grant that this may be your lot.—HENRY CRUGER.

Here is a fine piece of manly pathos. It is a sermon in itself. One old man writing to the other, and wisely, if also somewhat mournfully, discounting the past. It is the tranquillity of one who, frail and in harbour, knows he is never to try the ocean again. As Waller sings,

> The seas are quiet when the winds give o'er :
> So calm are we when passions are no more :
> For then we know how vain it was to boast
> Of fleeting things, so certain to be lost.

It does one good to read a letter like this. There is no mawkish sentimentalism about it—no unprofitable croak of *vanitas vanitatum* —but the natural result of that long and last experience which must come to most of us. And as Cruger said " Ditto to Mr. Burke," so I say " Ditto to Mr. Cruger." It is a blessing at the end of a long existence to be looking forward with hope, and not backwards

with fruitless regrets. I should like myself, when I came towards the last milestone and the wheels were moving slowly, to be in a frame of mind to sing or say with pleasant James Smith—

> World, in thy ever-busy mart
> I've acted no unnoticed part—
> Would I resume it? O, No!
> Four acts are done, the jest grows stale;
> The waning lamps burn dim and pale;
> And reason asks—*Cui bono?*

I wonder when Matthew Brickdale was breathing his last, a haggard old man under his son's roof, and Cruger was slowly closing his eyes upon the world, three thousand miles away from the scene of his Parliamentary contests, if either thought of the fierce election cries and party tumults of other days, or if they thought of them, whether it was merely as a misty dream. "The memory of the past," says the Eastern poet, "is a sigh," and so it is, and so it probably was to the two old Bristol candidates.

Young Ladies' Fortunes.

Great a progress as the press boasts to have made of late years—and notwithstanding its brilliant essays, electrical messages and rapid intelligence—in one particular it has gone back. In the most interesting department it falls short of the broadsheet of a hundred years ago. I mean the marriage column, or what the wits call "the hatched, matched, and despatched"—the birth, marriage, and death—column. You take up your paper now of a Saturday morning, and the lady of the house or the daughters pounce at once upon "the Gazette of earthly blisses," as a poetical friend of mine calls the conjugal announcements. There you read that an such and such a day, Miss Jones was married to Mr. Smith at such a church by the Rev. Mr. So and So; or if they are people fond of creating sensations, you are further informed that the Rev. Mr. So and So was assisted by another of his cloth. But this is all you know—all the advertisement tells you. Not a word is said about the appearance or the portion of the bride. Miss Jones may be a blackamoor and a pauper for all you know, and, in fact, there is nothing to satisfy one's natural curiosity.

Now, the old newspapers were in this respect vastly superior to their journalistic successors of the conceited 19th century. They were not content to teaze your inquisitiveness with any such meagre scraps of matrimonial news. They dealt in particulars. They recited the lady's good qualities and every pound of fortune she brought her lucky spouse. For instance, I take up a file of the Bristol newspapers of 1742, only about 120 years ago. We are apt to speak with contempt of the backwardness of the old broadsheets, yet show me anything in modern journalism half so full and satisfying as their announcements of marriages. Here is one, under the head of Bristol, January 8, 1742 :—

Last week, — Masters, Esq., son of Thomas Masters, Member of Parliament for Cirencester, was married at the parish church of Almondsbury, Gloucestershire, to Miss Cann, sole daughter and heiress of Sir William Cann, late of Brislington, Bart., and niece of Thomas Chester, of Knowle, Esq., M.P. for the county of Gloucester; a young lady of fine sense, great sweetness of temper, uncommon prudence, with a most agreeable person, and a fortune of £20,000.

Lucky Master Masters; we might well say with the old song—

She is a charming woman,
And he a most fortunate man.

The first announcement in the same interesting column on the following week is as follows :—

On Tuesday Mr. William Stephens, an eminent linen-draper, in Christ Church parish, was married to Miss Bartlet, eldest daughter of John Bartlet, Esq., late Mayor of this city; a polite and beautiful young lady, with a handsome fortune.

Here, it will be seen, no sum is given, but we may presume it was very large, upon the principle, *omne ignotum pro magnifico*. It is clear, however, Mr. Bartlet would sooner not name the sum, but leaves it to the imagination of his friends : he might have had

a fast year of it at the Mansion House, and was somewhat cleaned out. In the announcement immediately following this, the bridegroom, who is one Captain William Allen, of College Green, and marries a Miss Whitehead, daughter of Mr. Whitehead, of St. James's, is said "to have acquired an easy fortune," from being formerly commander in the Guinea trade, for which reason "he has left off the seas."

The following, under the head of February 12, 1742, is a specimen of mitigated praise, that somehow or other makes you think the lady was plain, since the general allusion to a "pleasing person" is rather pointedly left out—

On Thursday last, Mr George Beecher, the youngest son of John Beecher, Esq., Senior, Alderman, and father of the City, was married to Miss Williams, an agreeable young lady, with a handsome fortune.

Here again, no sum is named. Some of the announcements are knocked off in a very business-like, brief style, as, for example, "William Green, Esq., to Mrs. Elizabeth Beaupré Bell, £1,500 per annum fortune" The principal attractions of the widow were clearly her £1,500 a-year, for not a word about her amiability or beauty. In the following week, the marriage column is still more business-like, to wit, "Samuel Butler, an eminent attorney, to Miss Davis, £8,000."—"Thomas Ripley, Esq., to Miss Bucknal, *a* £40,000 fortune." The latter, I presume, from the indefinite article being prefixed to it, was considered *par excellence* a wopping dowry, and so it was. As the Irishman said, "I'd be willing to take the three sisters round at the money"

In some of the marriages a panegyric was not only bestowed on the fair bride, but the Editor contrived to compliment the whole family also; as, for instance, on March 10, 1742. we read as follows :

Thursday Mr. Samuel Gardiner, Master of Colston's Hospital, was married to Miss Peggy Love, daughter of Mr. John Love, an eminent merchant of this city, a very agreeable young lady, and of a family remarkable for beauty and politeness.

I need not go on multiplying instances. The most interesting inquiry for us at this distance is how those announcements came to find their way into the papers. At present, we know the grand contracting parties themselves are the persons who furnish the intelligence to the newspapers. In London, announcements are paid for as advertisements ; in the Provinces the less fortunate Editor has to insert them for love, not for money. Some years ago, it was the fashion in a few districts of the North of England to send the Editor cards and a piece of wedding cake with the announcement, and I have known two or three instances in the course of my experience when it has occurred even in Bristol. If the practice, however, were in general use, looking at the list of marriages which we see in the country papers, the cloyed Editor might not only support himself and his whole family upon that luscious food, but he would probably come in time to resemble the priest's boy in Horace, who ran away surfeited from the honeyed cakes that were offered at his master's shrine.

If, then, these old marriage announcements were transmitted to the public prints by the families of the couples joined in wedlock, what fulsome egotists our forefathers and foremothers must have

been, to talk about the beauty, the prudence, and politeness of their daughters, and not only of the perfections of the bride, but of the whole family also. And then about the fortunes! What an opportunity for people to put forth false representations of wealth! Who was to contradict them—who but the bridegroom himself? And I suppose, even admitting the amount named to be a gross exaggeration, he found it to his advantage to let it pass unchallenged, since the more he was supposed to have got with his wife, the larger the credit he was likely to attain, pecuniary and personal, from the public. I daresay, too, the same public had a tolerably correct way of discounting the reported fortunes. According to Lever, the approved plan in Ireland is "to divide the given sum by six, when the quotient will give you a flattering representation of the real fortune." Perhaps the old Bristolians had some arithmetical key of their own, of this kind, for coming at the actual amount of dower. They divided the newspaper statement by a given figure, and thus reached the true result.

"Doubtless it was all the Editor's doing," possibly remarks the reader. That's right: stick it all, my good friend, upon the poor Editor, who has to answer for everything that appears in his pages from the monster gooseberry to a bad speech. But how could the Editor know anything about the fortune unless the family furnished him with the amount? He could not be supposed to be on intimate terms with all the people who got married in the place. He was not, I am sure, invited to all the wedding breakfasts; and the element in which he lived and worked was so much oftener black than white, the bridesmaids would never consent to have their healths proposed by his diabolic agency, even though he primed his speech with all the jokes in his "Varieties" column. Now, you may depend upon it, the bridal announcement was concocted after or at the bridal breakfast, and possibly the amount of fortune and the perfections of the newly-married lady put to the vote, amidst much laughter at the pretty conceit of humbugging the public.

I remember some years ago speaking with a very old Bristolian on the subject of this antique custom of publishing the bride's fortune in the same paragraph that announced the event; and he told me the practice, from being at first a real *bonâ fide* statement, fell into disuse and discredit and was at length wholly discontinued owing to the absurdly extravagant sums which folks put down, in order to appear very wealthy to the world; the amount named being, in some instances, more than the bride's whole family, if they clubbed their fortunes together, could muster amongst them.

Still, if the pecuniary part were omitted, I don't see why all the rest should be likewise curtailed to the meagre proportions of a modern marriage announcement. Why should we not be told something of the "politeness," "fine sense," and "pleasing appearance," of the fair one? Or have these good qualities gone out of fashion? for we refuse to accept the illnatured explanation given by a friend of ours, that of old—as we know from history and tradition—the Bristol women were so "plain," when a good looking one got married they thought it necessary to prominently and particularly state the fact.

Tombs and Tablets in Bristol.

[I cannot say how many of the tombs and tablets referred to in the following paper still retain the places they occupied when it was written. In the Cathedral I believe several of them have been displaced or put outside in the Cloisters during the restoration; and those in St. Werburgh's have, of course, disappeared with that ancient church itself.]

A man cannot always keep his attention as close to the sermon as he should. A few Sundays ago, when our parson was wandering a little away from the text, my eye unfortunately got fixed on an old monument which embellished the wall between the two windows close to my pew. It was not a very old monument either; for it was put up when my father was a boy, to the memory of one who, I heard him say, was very far from deserving all the fine things said of him by his family and the sculptor whom they employed. "He was a good man," says Rogers, "who first made stones preach sermons, but a wicked one who made them tell lies;" and there are not a few "whoppers" on the identical one referred to. However, I allude to it merely to account for the idea which entered into my head, as I looked at its great white urn and weeping willow on black marble background. That idea was to give a running notice of some of the tombs and tablets to be found in our ancient city churches; for I fancy you may read the social character of a people and a period on gravestones as well as in books, and that the sepulchral epitaphs and inscriptions of an age will give you an insight into what sort of people they were whose ashes moulder beneath them. A wit once referred to the churchyards as containing "the under-ground population of the place;" but their survivors should not always treat them on the principle, "Out of sight out of mind." Preceding generations have, like successive crops, grown up and been gathered in, and the same fate awaits ourselves, yet we should not like to think that those who came after us will not care to know how we lived and moved amongst our fellow-men. Many a stirring citizen, who filled a prominent place in his parish, and perhaps made a little noise amongst his neighbours, now leaves no other record of his existence but the carved tablet fixed on the church wall or inserted in the pillar above the family pew. Let us, then, pay his memory the compliment to read it, and collect as much of the man as we can from the flattering record of his friends. Our city forefathers appeared to be as fond as most people of "the storied urn," and the walls of our churches are, on the whole, pretty well dappled with their substantial memorials; not a few of them presenting internal evidence of having been suggested by the defunct previous to their departure. "Let no man write my epitaph," said the Irish Emmett: "Let no man write my epitaph,"

said another, echoing the sentiment, and adding, "for I will write it myself."

But how different, judging from mural inscriptions, is the handwriting on the walls of our churches to what it was in Belshazzar's palace, "You are weighed in the balance and found wanting :" for there is nothing wanting (save occasional truth) in the flattering sentences one reads on the smooth surfaces of those slabs of white marble, where all the cardinal virtues, and a few more, are catalogued—

So very much is said,
One half will never be believed,
The other never read.

You cannot get survivors to set up such remarkably candid epitaphs as Athenæus supplied for the tomb of King Ninus, whose career, however, in many respects resembled that of some fat affluent and useless citizens, whose earthly merits consist in taking care of themselves :—"Ninus, the Assyrian, had an ocean of gold and other riches, more than the sand in the Caspian Sea : he never saw the stars, and perhaps he never desired it : he never stirred up the holy fire amongst the magi, nor spake to his people ; but he was *most valiant to eat and drink* ; and having mingled his wines he threw the rest upon the stones. This man is dead ; behold his sepulchre, and now hear where Ninus is. I am gone to hell, and when I went thither, I neither carried gold, or horses, or silver chariot with me."

But I must not waste the reader's time with "meditations amongst the tombs," when I merely purpose to enumerate some of them. Camden, in his "Remains," furnishes us with examples of great men with brief epitaphs : on the inverse principle little men, I think, have generally long ones. It is true that the monument of Edward Colston in All Saints' Church is not a striking example of sententious brevity, and I confess to you, I never look at those two long panels behind Rysbrach's recumbent figure of the philanthropist, filled as they are with columns of figures carried out and totted up in true counting-house style, that they do not strike me as somewhat suggestive of the shop, and characteristic of the methodical book-keeping habits of the old merchant. Kippis tells us he was very precise in his accounts, and so it seems, for his tombstone reads like a page from his ledger. The atmosphere of commerce also surrounds the tomb of Canynges in Redcliff Church, and a catalogue of his ships, hung over his grave, makes the south transept of the old place somewhat suggestive of Lloyd's, and you expect to find each, like their owner, put down as A 1 in the register. The ruling passion will, however, be strong in death.

Suppose we take a turn first through the Cathedral. We won't waste our time peering into niches of worn-nosed monks and abbots, whose effigies are usually on a Sunday covered over by the hats of the congregation or the caps of the Colston boys. We learn nothing from them in their stiff Bath-stone coats. In old Phillips's time, when he used to show the visitor over the building, he was never very particular as to what bishop or abbot occupied

any given recess: he always, however, was sure to point out some one of them as the head of the abbatical house "who was accused of keeping seven women;" but whether it was Nailhart, or Paul Bush, or anybody else, it made little difference to him. Next the north door is a monument that never fails to attract attention, where Genius and Benevolence bend over Sterne's Eliza, a married lady, who has gained undying but unenviable fame through openly flirting with the author of Tristram Shandy. In the north aisle is a tablet associated with another literary celebrity: for here, on a simple piece of marble, may be read the touching lines by Mason, the poet, on "Dead Maria." His wife was doubtless all he described her, and, like most good husbands, too happy in their first choice to be able to endure solitude long, he was (it is said) making love to a lady, designed to supply her place, while superintending the erection of this tender memorial to

That best gift which heaven so lately gave. *

About this period, 1760-70, you can perceive, from more than one inscription, they were the palmy days of the Hotwells, from reference to Bristol's "fount," "the healing spring," &c.

At the beginning of the 17th century, there was a particular kind of monument in fashion. It often represents a whole family, the two heads of the house reading at a desk or lectern, and the sons and daughters in graduated succession behind them. In these the figures are for the most part coloured. On the south wall of the choir, below Abbot Newland's tomb, is a good specimen of this kind of memorial: it surmounts the grave of Sir John Young and Dame Joan his wife. On it are two men kneeling, in armour, and a woman lying along before them; beneath are eight children kneeling, with a desk before them. The inscription accounts for the appearance of the second gentleman in the sepulchral tableau, the lady having been twice married; her first husband being Sir Giles Strangeways, who, with courteous liberality, is permitted to share in the posthumous honours of his relict and of her second love. The eight children represent the family of the deceased lady by her two lords—by her first she had five, by her second three, and doubtless they dwelt together with as much unity in the domicile of their stepfather as in the compartment of the monument. In

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* In connection with Mason's first marriage and mural tablet on his wife, the following extract from the *Quarterly Review*, No. 187, for Dec., 1853, page 39, of the "Life and Works of Gray," edited by the Rev. J. Mitford, may not be unacceptable to the readers:—

"Mason was now meditating marriage, but was slow in making up his mind. 'He has not properly,' said Gray, in accounting for his hesitation, 'any thing one can call a passion about him, except a little malice and revenge.' He chose his wife for her taciturnity, but, however much he may have abhorred pretentious women, he must have been mortified, when his unpoetical bride crumpled up and thrust into her pocket a copy of complimentary verses with which he presented her on the morning of their marriage. Gray describes her as a 'pretty, modest, innocent, interesting figure:' and when, after a brief union of eighteen months, she died of consumption in March, 1767, the sorrow of her husband testified to her worth. The celebrated epitaph upon her tomb in Bristol Cathedral must have owed its fame to the concluding stanza, for the only fine line

St. Werburgh's Church might be seen a somewhat similar instance of a lady blessed with a "duplex" proof of the devoted love of two husbands. Humphrey Brown's widow, whose maiden name was White, married Sir John Seymour, of Bitton who, on her death, placed her ashes with those of her first husband, and wrote a punning epitaph upon both—

> Here lies a Brown, a White, the colours one,
> Pale drawn by Death, here shaded by a stone,
> One house did hold them both whilst life did last,
> One grave do hold them both now life is past.

To these he added some Latin lines setting forth his own affection for the same lady, whom he compliments on being the object *gemini amoris*. Sir John was a pleasant gentleman I daresay, and so fond of a joke that he could not resist one even at the expense of his departed wife. He was so partial to a pun, as we may infer from his cutting a couple on the family tombstone, that I have no doubt he laid hold of many a friend by the button-hole, when he had made a verbal witticism, and bored his company after dinner with faint plays upon words.

We should be shocked now-a-day at any man carving such grim pleasantries on his wife's or his own tomb, yet it was no uncommon thing at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries to have recourse to this queer style. Thus, in the old church of St. Michael's, there was a tablet above the vault of the Ashes, where the name of the family was pedantically played upon in every line. I think the inscription was given in full in the *Bristol Times* a few months ago: one couplet, however, may be quoted to convey my meaning—

> Rak'd up in ashes here doth } Ash { remain,
> In hope that ashes shall be } Ash { again.

Even the epitaph of Sir William Penn, in Redcliff Church, which belongs to the same period, is not free from quaint conceits more or less aimed at in many inscriptions we then meet with. As the reader knows, he was Admiral in the British service, and the warlike father of a peaceful Quaker son: having fought hard, we are told he withdrew after the great battle with the Dutch, "made for his end with a gentle and even gale, in much peace, arrived and

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in the previous portion is the invocation to his dead Maria to speak from the tomb, and this concluding stanza is now known to have been the production of Gray. He showed the original verses of Mason to Mr. Nicholls, saying, 'This will never do for an ending; I have altered them thus':—

> Tell them though 'tis an awful thing to die—
> 'Twas e'en to thee—yet the dread path once trod,
> Heaven lifts its everlasting portals high,
> And bids the pure in heart behold their God.

The longer these lines are meditated, the more their beauty is felt: they have every merit which is proper to the kind of writing. Nothing can be finer than the eulogy on the deceased, implied in the brief parenthesis, 'Twas e'en to thee.' Nothing more rich in sublime consolation than the sentence which follows; nothing more severely simple in expression. Nor is the stanza a mere memento to the individual—it speaks, as it professes to do, to the hearts of all the world."

anchored in his last and best port at Wanstead, in the County of Essex, 16th September, 1670, being then but 49 years of age." There is a little ambiguity, as the reader will perceive, in the inscription, for literally it conveys the impression that Wanstead, and not Heaven, was the last and best port which the Admiral made for. Penn must have been as worn with service as the tattered banners which drape his tomb, to have sunk under his "bodily infirmities" at the comparatively early age of forty-nine.

But to return to the Cathedral. In the style of Sir John Young's monument is the Codrington tomb on the north side of the choir, a little above Bishop Paul Bush's. It contains the effigies of a man in armour and a woman kneeling, and under them are ranged eight sons and nine daughters, with a Latin inscription long enough for even so large a family. From the anagram which it contains, as well as its syllabic turns on words, it has all the appearance of being written by a pedantic old schoolmaster. Robert Codrington, to whom it is erected, did the state some service, for though he died at forty-six he raised quite a forest of olive branches—seventeen, it seems, by the same wife. I should think the cradle could never have been at rest in his mansion.

Whilst the honest burgesses of Bristol, in going the way of all flesh, took care that the world should not be left in total ignorance of their previous existence, so far as money could purchase immortality at sixpence per chiselled letter (japanning included), some of the old fighting barons, who still sleep in our churches, were by no means so fortunate. Thus, in the gloom of the east aisle of the Mayor's Chapel, you see a couple of stalwart cross-legged crusaders, armed in mail to the very chins, and hands upon sword-hilts, lying on their backs on altar tombs; but who they are or whence they came, you know no more than whither they went: hardy, do-battle-looking fellows they seem, and so little dreamed they that the world would ever forget them, they did not condescend to have their names stuck upon their tombs. But the world has nevertheless forgotten them; and as you look at their hands on their sword-hilts, you laugh at the impotent menace which the attitude implies, and wonder what they would think if they were once more in the flesh, and John Bright, the Brummagem Quaker, had the bullying of them for an hour. Another of those cross-legged "great unknowns," whom the stone-cutters of the Middle Ages forgot to label for identification in the nineteenth century, may be seen in the north transept in St. Mary Redcliff. Popular tradition puts them all down for Berkeleys; and their posture suggests they had been to the Holy Land, for some antiquarians assert that none but tailors and crusaders are to be found cross-legged in this fashion—but this is all you know, and in truth it is not of the slightest consequence to you or to me to know more. The Knight Templar at Redcliff lies gloomily all alone in his glory and his coat of mail, while his opposite neighbour, the Bristol merchant, reposes like the head of a warm city household amongst his domestic servants, who seem to gather round their munificent master in death as in life. William, his cook, with knife and skimmer carved upon his tombstone, the local Alexis

Soyer of the fifteenth century, who, in his day, dressed many a Mayor's dinner in the great mansion below in Redcliff Street, has lain down near at hand. William Cole, Canynges' waiting man, is within call; and John Blecker, his brewer, almost makes the spot redolent to the imagination of malt and hops. Canynges, thus sleeping in the midst of his establishment, reminds one of the old Gothic Kings, on whose graves servants were slaughtered that they might wait on their masters in the other world.

It is, however, to the monuments of lesser men that you must look for those characteristic peculiarities which even the tomb cannot cover. Thus, at the nearer end of the east aisle in St. Mark's, you see the pretentious character of the owner on the lofty tomb and inscription full of fine airs of William Hilliard, Esq., who tells you that, after having "travelled over the greatest part of Europe, he returned to his native land a complete gentleman." Marry come up, Master Hilliard! for £6 10s. and a Cook's through ticket, thousands of Browns, Joneses, and Robinsons now make the grand tour every summer, and do not set up on that account for being complete gentlemen, or think of carving the fact on their tombstones. On the tomb of John Freeman, Esq., in All Saints, you can read at once the citizen regular in his dealings and in the family pew on Sundays, and in the daily consumption of two glasses of sherry—"He adorned an honourable old age with the exact exercise of the social and religious duties, and, by a strict course of temperance, attained to the age of eighty-four." By the vestry of St. Werburgh's you read in a few words the character of one who evidently prided himself on the cardinal virtue of paying his Christmas accounts on the last day of the old year, if it did not fall on Sunday. Robert Earle, Esq, some time Mayor of Bristol, "a man of strict honour and justice, and remarkably punctual in all his dealings." In Christ Church is commenced, and in Mary-le-Port continued, the genealogy of a wondrously staunch Church and King family, with the appropriate name of *Standfast*. The first known of them was Rector of the former parish, and you may read his eventful history on a little mural monument in the chancel there. You learn how, in the reign of Charles I., "for his loyalty to the King and steadfastness to the established religion," he suffered fourteen years' sequestration, while an Independent Cromwellian was preaching in his pulpit. The old man was blind twenty years before his death, yet, notwithstanding this infirmity, his tablet tells us, he "performed the offices of the church exactly" during that time. Two days before his death he had an exposition of rhyme, and wrote some verses to be placed on his monument, the practical effect of which was to prove to posterity that the gods never made the good old man poetical. You pick up the threads of the family history again on the walls of Mary-le-Port Church, where a whole race of pharmaceutical Smiths, respectable parish apothecaries, spring from one Thomas of that name, a Taunton man, who came to Bristol, and married the granddaughter of this same old staunch Church-and-King parson Standfast. Naturally proud of the connection, the Smiths have recorded the fact through several generations, as represented in a row of tablets that grace

the north wall of the sacred edifice. The Smiths, to their honour be it said, were all true Blues and stood by their old Standfast colours, each taking care to tell that he inherited and held to the last, the "sound principles of the family." The Smiths of Mary-le-Port, I should say, never gave a vote for a Radical. Two more instances taken, one from St. Thomas and the other from Temple, of men who were not ashamed to tell their trades to posterity, and I have done. In the chancel of Temple is a monument to John Stone, who was "three times Mayor, and had four wives," and died in 1575. Instead of sticking up ramping lions, hands and daggers, or flying griffins over his tomb, he boldly placed the brewers' arms on the polished marble, and told succeeding ages that he was an honest brother of the bung. The monument in Saint Thomas is that of one Cater, a sugar-baker, who did not surmount the tablet with heraldic monsters, but carved above his mortal remains the symbols of his trade, in the shape of a tittler or sugar-loaf, with two ancient implements of the saccharine art placed saltire-wise.

Meditations amongst the Newton Tombs.

When the Newton Chapel stood alone by the west end of the North aisle, and where, of course, it still stands—but before it was absorbed into the congregational part of the Cathedral, and made comfortable with cocoa matting and backed seats, and rush-bottomed chairs, seeming and feeling like an old Gothic parlour or dormitory rather than a mortuary recess—its monuments looked cold and reserved, and stony and feudal enough. Now, however, that one is brought into close and familiar contact with them, so, as it were, to be on a family footing with them, you appear to yourself to have rather established a domestic understanding with a highly respectable but old-fashioned household, than to be contemplating the tombs and monumental effigies of departed generations. It is especially difficult to resist this impression during the sermon, which you can never hear from this spot, and one's vagrant thoughts cannot be kept within the bounds of sober meditation. Thus, as you sit by the altar tomb on which Sir Henry Newton and his wife, Lady Catherine, lie with pillows under their heads and in as conjugal juxtaposition as Mr. and Mrs. Caudle themselves, you feel like an intimate friend admitted to the bed-chamber of the dignified couple—an illusion which the comfortable carpeted floor quite encourages. The arrangements, too, of the recumbent pair are quite exemplary. Sir Henry lies outside, giving his good lady, as in duty bound, the warm place next the wall, and altogether the situation is so suggestive of domestic relations that the severity of the chivalrous age is lost in the associations which the monument calls up, and at most you can only regard it as a representation of mediæval married life. It is true that those haughty lines, which manifestly were not originally inscribed there, are calculated to check familiarity and keep the spectator, if only an ordinary mortal and commoner, at a proper distance. But when you have read them over a couple of times, you collect from their dim and distant grandeur this and no more—that the deceased was a respectable country gentleman of good family, who went regularly to church and was charitable. Here they are,

> Gurney, Hampden, Cradock Newton, last—
> Held on the measure of that ancient line
> Of barons' blood: full seventy years he past,
> And did in peace his sacred soul resign.
> His Christ he loved, he loved to feed the poor,
> Such love assures a life that dies no more.

It will be seen that no mention is here made of Lady Catherine, who has her fair share of the tomb but not of the epitaph. However, as deeds speak better than words and there are six children carved in relief underneath, perhaps the poet thought

these half dozen domestic virtues would serve her instead of as many heroic lines which her husband enjoys. Sir Henry has lost his hands. When he had them they were doubtless closed palm to palm and pointed in a supplicatory posture to heaven. The Cromwellian troopers did not like praying statues, and they very probably chopped them off. The thing was in their ideas Popish and purgatorial and idolatrous, and when they had possession of the city and the cathedral too, and stamped about the latter in iron-heeled boots, they amused themselves on wet days with acts of iconoclasm. Over the way, in the Mayor's chapel, on the left as you enter, there was a marble monument also without hands, or it was without hands until some twenty years or so ago, when a pair not the most shapely were put on it. In a Northern Cathedral where there is a monument similarly mutilated, there is a popular legend that the departed knight, whom the recumbent figure represents, having refused mercy to a widow's son accused of poaching, had the manacles slipped over the young offender's hands when thus closed in supplication; the mother prayed that he might never be allowed to raise his own in entreaty to heaven, and that after his death the monument was one morning found in the mutilated form in which it has since remained, some indignant ghost getting the credit of the Cromwellian soldier's act.

Close to Sir Henry and Dame Catherine's conjugal tomb is that of a solitary Knight, who, having all the bed or slab to himself, at first strikes you as the old bachelor of the family, who, like Uncle Toby, loved a clear stage and undivided couch to kick out or stretch his limbs on. As well as his neighbour and kinsman Sir Henry, he is locked up in steel; from the two tablets, however, which surmount the tomb, you will find that he, too, like Benedict, was a married man: though what his wife did to be "a banished woman from her husband's bed" I can neither say nor guess. It does, nevertheless, seem invidious that while Dame Catherine is allowed to place her pillow by Sir Henry's head, Lady Grace lies in her leaden coffin unrepresented above ground. The solitary Newton is named Sir John; "a man of great courage," says his epitaph, "and the greatest loyalty to his prince and honour to his country—a credit and noble ornament to his name and family." Lady Grace Newton, we are told on her tablet, "died without issue," and perhaps Sir John refused to allow her to lie by his side because she omitted to furnish him with an heir.

Oh, the long, long years that these Newtons have lain stretched out on their backs, with their heads on their stony pillows! All the Bishops, and the Deans, and the Canons they have seen in and out of that Cathedral, and all the future Bishops, Deans, and Canons they are destined to see come and go—that is, supposing there to be any "speculation" in those alabaster eyes of theirs,—Bishops Carleton, and Trelawney, and the sententious Hall, and the profound Joseph Butler, and their own learned namesake, Thos. Newton, the expounder of the Prophecies. The graven images of the lords and ladies of Barr's Court look sociable enough lying on their pillows when the place is filled with a living and breathing congregation; but do you ever imagine them when the people are

all gone away, and the Cathedral is locked up, and they are left to their own companionship, and their recumbent outlines become almost ghostly as the deepening shadows fall upon them—and as the night wears on, and the moon comes in and touches their apathetic features? And then again in the early morning, when the grey twilight peeps in, and they gradually come forth from the gloom. It is strange to think of this dormitory of statues. The idea of their monotonous fixedness, their tenacity to one posture through all these hundreds of years becomes almost oppressive, so that it imparts a sense of relief to recur in fancy to that popular superstition, which says that at certain times on certain nights these stony figures rise from their stony pillows, descend from their tombs, and stretch their stony limbs with a measured promenade up and down the moonlit aisles: Sir Henry, in his breastplate and backpiece and cuisses, giving his arm to Lady Catherine, with her stiff stomacher in the stately fashion of the feudal courtier; while the solitary Sir John, for want of a companion, has to take his walk all alone.

There is, too, about old monuments of the kind, a rock-like solidity, that makes it difficult for you to associate with flesh and blood, or anything but stone or marble or alabaster, the originals themselves. But if you do as I did many years ago, take a walk out to old Barr's Court, near Bitton, where these Newtons lived and moved and led a jolly life enough for generations, the family in the mortuary chapel on the south side of the Cathedral do no longer seem to you quite the petrefactions they appeared. There is little or none of their old Gloucestershire mansion left, beyond a low line of offices, the remains possibly of the stables or servants' apartments, but the site is well defined and the moat which surrounded the goodly Grange still remains, and there is an air of other days about the spot. When I visited it, some twenty years ago, one of the farm servants had an hour or two before fished out of this same moat an antique squat-bellied wine bottle, such as you now only see in pictures and old curiosity shops, but which doubtless was once filled with good Rhenish, and most probably emptied by one of these same Newtons, possibly even one of the stately personages that represented in alabaster lie on their backs on marble pillows. That squat bottle at once animated all these statues to my imagination and associated them with convivial life, though long ago.

The monuments themselves look so old that it is difficult to fancy their ever having been new—to fancy the day when the sculptor and the contractor having completed their work, the family from Barr's Court rolled into Bristol in their great glass coach without springs, drawn by six fat Flemish mares with outriders, and pulled up in front of the north porch, and alighted and walked in to inspect the monument then glistening in vermillion and blue and gold. Yet such probably was the case, and as the great glass coach rumbled through Castle Street, and Wine Street, and Broad Street, the shopkeepers, as they stood at their doors, all knew it, and said to one another, "There are the Newtons come in to see the new monument." I hope the Newtons paid for it "like good old

English gentry, all of the olden time," and that the Bristol tradesman or tradesmen that did the work had not to make two or three journeys out to Barr's Court before they could get their bill settled, being threatened with a souse in the moat for their importunity. I rather think, however, the Newtons were good payers. In their epitaphs they are described as good Christians and an honour to their country, and no man can be either one or the other, who does not settle his accounts regularly at Christmas, which I hope all the subscribers to the *Bristol Times and Felix Farley* at least will do, and thus prove themselves both "good Christians and honours to their country."

Referring to these same Newtons, of Barr's Court, the late Mr. H. C. Harford, of Frenchay, wrote to the author in 1865 :—

"The Newtons, of Barr's Court, mentioned in your memoir, and whose fine old monuments are still to be seen in our Cathedral, were of the same family as the great Sir Isaac, although the circumstance is not mentioned in any biography with which the writer is acquainted. On the contrary, it is generally only said that he was of an old family, nor does the writer know from whence his grandfather gained this information, but he often mentioned it to his friends; and when the writer's father was a boy he had the fact strongly corroborated by a visit to the ruins of the house, which are still to be seen in the parish of Bitton. They were looking at the house when a very old man came up, and, without their asking him any questions, said, 'When I was a boy, sir, and the family lived there, they used to be visited by a cousin from Lincolnshire, *who was the most desperate clever man in all the world.*' There can be but little doubt who that desperate clever man was."

Sir Charles Wetherell.

KNIGHT AND ERST RECORDER OF BRISTOL.

Honest Sir Charles—or "Old Charley," as some people with a fond familiarity in which there was not a particle of disrespect were in the habit of speaking of him—so completely belonged to the old school (hardly a member of which outlived the Reform Bill) that though he only disappeared from amongst us a comparatively few years ago, antique to our fancy as was his mould, he seemed to have belonged to the last century. That plain old rugged Saxon face of his was a capital index to his character—the great constitutional lawyer, the stubborn Tory, the impracticable Attorney-General, the kind, quaint old gossip. Whether on the bench trying a felony, in the House of Commons pounding the Papists and O'Connell, or in the back parlour of the White Lion with a glass of Hollands and water in his hand when his day's work was done, Sir Charles was unique, and we never shall see his like again—dear, able, uncompromising, Old Charley.

Sir Charles was an Oxford townsman; I imagine his father was one of the Heads of Houses. But he was so notable, so renowned a character in himself that no one troubled to enquire who his father was. By the constituency that sent him to Parliament—by the Cabinet which employed his great legal talents and were perplexed by his unbending nature—by the grey-moustachioed Cumberland, late King of Hanover, with whom he was hand and glove—by all he was hardly less respected for his ability than regarded, even for his oddities. That great bearded Cumberland, who seemed to have no other friendship in the world, was the friend of the rugged and honest old knight; and when Ernest was on the throne, the Recorder of Bristol was on more than one occasion a day late for his sessions through prolonging his visit to his royal crony, when over a bottle of old port they probably talked of older politics, and gave the palm to the oldest. The hospitalities, however, were not all on one side, for Sir Charles once entertained the Royal Duke in his legal den in Stone Buildings, when the dinner must have been as peculiar as the company was distinguished, for the Knight's chambers were not very sumptuously furnished; as once when a deputation consisting of Sir Richard Vaughan, and a few of the great Bristol magnates, waited on him by appointment in solemn form on some state affair, Sir Charles made his appearance (it was about ten o'clock) in his flannel waistcoat, lathering his face and flourishing his shaving-brush to the most emphatic passages. "Glad to see you, gentlemen," said he in his deep grave voice as they entered; "pray be seated, if you can find chairs enough, and if not my clerk will go out and borrow some."

The best of his home interviews, however, was that which he held with a former Town Clerk, who called on him at Oxford, relative to the State Trial of the King *v.* Pinney. He found Sir Charles immersed in the double occupation of breakfast and toilet. The Knight was in his jersey, while before the fire airing on a chair was his shirt. The breakfast things were on the table : Sir Charles was lathering his chin ; the tea was poured out, and in the teapot was immersed the razor—the souchong being made to serve not only for breakfast, but to give an emollient edge to the Sheffield blade. On this occasion Sir Charles referred with some warmth to the evidence of a man in Bristol, who created some laughter by declaring, on his examination about the riots, that he saw Sir Charles come out hitching up his breeches. "That man swore, Sir, what was untrue—I will contradict him on my oath, Sir, for I wore suspenders," exclaimed Sir Charles. Nevertheless the worthy Knight had a habit of tugging up his small clothes ; and when he spoke for a couple of hours with such vehemence against the Catholic Relief Bill, Sir Nicholas Tindal made the House roar with laughter, when he declared "the only lucid intervals in the hon. and learned gentleman's speech were those between his breeches and his waistcoat," alluding to the display of shirt then manifest, and the pauses which Sir Charles made in the course of his oration, to pull up the drooping nether garment.

Talking of these same anti-Emancipation orations of his, he became at one time so popular, owing to his uncompromising hostility to that measure, that when he was coming down to Bristol to hold the Assizes as usual, the magistrates issued handbills entreating the people, who were expected to go out and draw him in his carriage through the streets, not to make any public demonstration which, however well deserved, would be embarrassing to one who was then about to enter Bristol in the grave capacity of a judge. Nevertheless immense crowds assembled and greeted him with loud cheers, as he drove up to his lodgings. Two years or so afterwards, the popular Knight had to make his escape with more haste than dignity from Bristol to avoid being murdered, probably by the same crowds who cheered him before ; so true was it that which Napoleon said, when followed through Paris by applauding millions—"They would cheer as loudly if they were accompanying me to the scaffold."

The rugged strength Sir Charles evinced in parliament, and at the Chancery bar, gave way to a sort of lazy listlessness on the bench ; and many a stranger who has looked in to see the notable Sir Charles Wetherell in the Bristol Sessions Court, has been surprised to behold in the somewhat stupid looking old man, the vehement orator of the House of Commons, and the great constitutional and Chancery lawyer. Nevertheless, there were moments when he would wake up to his work, when that work was sufficient to provoke his dormant powers, in a manner which showed that though the lion might doze in the sun his strength was as great as ever. He was as slow to give a decision as his friend Eldon, and would stave it off as long as he could, but when he did give it it was worth having. However, he got, in his own

odd uncouth way, through as much work in one day as some would in two. He would sit late, and as the night wore on, occasionally like the good Homer, would nod. He had an innocent way of beguiling time occupied by the address of a heavy-headed barrister, or the slow details of a petty case, and when you thought he was taking elaborate notes, he was diligently engaged in making pictures on a sheet of foolscap. His drawings, if they possessed no other merit, had great simplicity, as he chiefly confined himself to one walk of art, namely, the delineation of trees and cows, and cows and trees alternately. Whether if he had devoted himself solely to painting he would have rivalled Cuyp or Paul Potter I don't pretend to say, but those who possessed themselves of the off-hand sketches which he carelessly left behind him on the cushion, affected to see considerable spirit in the Knight's efforts. On one occasion (in the Cooper's Hall, I think it was,) two barristers were wrangling late in the evening over a case, when they discovered that Old Charley had dropped into a balmy doze in his chair, lulled no doubt thereto by their drowsy murmur: upon this one of them who was up to fun, affected to dispute the correctness of part of the evidence cited by his opponent, and at the same time awoke the Knight by appealing to him upon the point. Sir Charles looked profoundly on the sheet of paper before him, which was as covered with pictorial hieroglyphics as Cleopatra's needle, and gravely replied "I do not find it on my notes," and no wonder, for there were only cows and trees as usual. There was a solemn drollery about him at times which was most refreshing, and made you think there was more fun in him than he cared to let people see. He tried a great omnibus case, when these vehicles were first employed in Bristol, and the proprietors maintained they were not plying for hire according to law. In giving judgment Sir Charles said "We see those modes of conveyance traversing our streets; and when importunate gentlemen stand behind them and politely call on you to come in, entreat you to come in; nay, if you *are an old woman, compel you to come in whether you will or not*, if this be not plying for hire within the meaning of the statute, *I don't know what is!*" This he said without even the trace of a smile on his strong plain Saxon features. Indeed, gravity was his forte, and as you saw him sitting by the fire with his Hollands and water in the back parlour of the Lion, like a fine old English Tory in a fine old English Tory house, listening to the gossip of the substantial citizens around him, and thoroughly interested in their chat, he still preserved something of judicial gravity, while as profoundly attentive to their opinions, even when he was Attorney-General, as if he were to be guided in his public conduct by their advice.

His addresses to the Grand Jury at the Sessions were amusing, from the fact that, whatever was the state of the Calendar, it furnished him with an apology for complimenting the Police. "Gentlemen," he would say, upon one occasion, "I do not find so many cases of stealing on your Quay (and he always pronounced this broadly as you spell it, and not as Key), which is doubtless owing to the vigilance of that excellent body, your police force, in

preventing thefts," &c. At the next Sessions, however, he would perhaps address them in this fashion : "Gentlemen of the Grand Jury, I find on the Calendar now before me numerous instances of stealing from your shipping on the Quays, but this doubtless is owing to the activity of your admirable police force, in capturing the culprits and perpetrators of an offence which, in a commercial city like yours, is of no small moment." Some persons thought he ought to have felt jealous of the Police as a new institution, and as a true *laudator temporis acti* have given the palm to those vestiges of antiquity, the old watchmen. Indeed he was once caricatured himself, as snoring with his lantern and rattle by his side in a watchbox, while underneath was written, "*An Old Charley.*"

For Brougham, as a lawyer, he shared the contempt bestowed upon that versatile peer by other "great men in equity," who said that if the Lord Chancellor knew a little law in addition to his other accomplishments, he would know something of everything. When he had to speak before his Lordship, old Sir Charles used generally to contrive to wheel his back round upon the Bench and Brougham, and bestow his ponderous pleading upon the Bar, as though they were more capable of understanding him than the peer in the high place. It used to be a joke of the young attorneys in London, to take their seats in what was called the pit of the Court of Chancery, and, as they termed it, "nod up old Charlie," which was done in this way. The Knight had a habit of fixing his eye on some one whilst speaking, and the young joker contrived to attract his attention to himself, and by sundry gestures convey an impression to the Knight that he was his client. Thus, after Sir Charles would say, in the course of his speech, "this shameful case," the wag, upon whom his eye was fixed, would nod concurrence, which instigated Sir Charles to wax warmer, and say "this abominable case;" the wag would then nod twice, and more energetically than before, when Sir Charles, progressing with approval, would designate it "a heinous, a nefarious, an iniquitous case," then, having exhausted his superlatives, the wag would cease to nod, and subside into a smile of approval, when the Knight resumed his argument.

His celebrated appearance for the old Corporations before the House of Lords, and the happy exordium of his address on that occasion are in the recollection of most people. It was suspected, however, that his old crony, Shadwell, who sat in commission for the Chancellor, by a leading question gave him the cue for the commencement of his address. "For whom do you appear, Sir Charles ?" said Shadwell. His response, as everybody knows, was :—"I appear *pro populo*—for every Corporation in England and Wales—when, therefore, I am asked for whom do I appear, I fear the reverse of that question may be put to me, and I may be asked, 'For whom do I *not* appear ?' Rochester confides in me—Marlborough depends upon me—Leicester is with me—Oxford regards me as her friend—Norwich affects me—Warwick goes with me—Coventry I take under my wings—with Worcester I am hand and glove—the rose of Lancaster I wear—Hereford consorts with me—Truro trusts me." However, before Sir Charles opened,

while he yet stood at the bar, their lordships waiting his opening, he called loudly to the attendant for a glass of wine negus, with a grating of nutmeg in it, and deliberately drank the same in the face of the astonished peers.

Glorious, great, and yet ungainly, relic of antiquity—"in wit a man, simplicity a child." He had but one fault—he loved money, and was (the truth must be told) penurious in his habits. I believe he lost his life through this failing. He fell off the box of a fly or gig and was killed, while he might have ridden safely inside in his own carriage had he kept one. It was laughable to see him returning from the sessions court in King Street, when the Guildhall was being rebuilt, and pause in the market at some old woman's basket to cheapen a half-a-dozen oranges, which he sucked as he sauntered round the brokers' shops to look for bargains of old china. This desultory fruit-purchasing practice was upon one occasion attended with comical inconvenience to the worthy Knight. I had the anecdote from the late Mr. T. Phinn, Q.C., of the Western Circuit, Member for Bath, and for a short time Secretary to the Admiralty. Mr. Phinn was specially brought down to the Bristol Sessions—I think, on an important Revenue case which was heard before Sir Charles in the Coopers' Hall, King Street—and stayed behind to speak with the attorney in the trial after the Court rose. On his return through the Market to the White Lion, where he lodged, Mr. Phinn was surprised to see the Recorder slowly returning a number of oranges from his capacious coat pockets into the basket of an old woman who was vehemently scolding him, and wishing there was a policeman in the way, that she might hand him over to justice as a knavish old fellow who "tried to defraud a poor woman of her property." Mr. Phinn held back for a little to watch the extraordinary scene, and heard Sir Charles say, "I assure you, madam, I am the person I represent myself to be, Sir Charles Wetherell, Knight and Recorder of Bristol: though I admit appearances are against me, seeing that being such, I had not a coin of the realm wherewith to discharge my debt." All this he repeated with as much deliberation as if he were charging the Grand Jury, while slowly one after the other he restored the oranges to the basket of the old woman, who was not to be appeased or convinced. "Call yourself Sir Charles Wetherell indeed, and not have a shilling: this makes the matter all the worse, you wicked, false, old man!"

Here Mr. Phinn put in an appearance and asked the learned Knight what was the matter. "Oh I am so glad so see you, Mr. Phinn," said Sir Charles, looking as much relieved as a shipwrecked crew when the Life-Boat pulled alongside. "Passing this good person's orange stall, I thought I would have a few of her fruit to take with my Madeira at the Lion; but putting my hand in my pocket I found I had not wherewith to pay for them."

The old lady, greatly frightened at her inadvertent affront to the Queen's judge and Recorder of Bristol, exclaimed, appealing to Mr. Phinn, "Oh Sir, is it *indeed* Sir Charles Wetherell? I had no notion it was he. Sure I did not think he'd go without a shilling."

Sir Charles, who was judicially fair under all circumstances, replied, "I admit, madam, that before I placed your wares in my pockets I should have certified myself I had the means of paying for them: but you too must also admit you were unnecessarily vituperative in your language—more objurgatory than the occasion called for." All the terrified orange seller could do was to beg his pardon, while Mr. Phinn produced a shilling, of which Sir Charles thankfully accepted "the loan," and recommenced the deal with the old lady, pocketing his oranges as complacently as if there had been no previous difference and strong language. "Now, Mr. Phinn," said the learned Knight when the transaction was ended, "will you join me over my Madeira and taste some of this fruit, when I can discharge my debt to you?"

Mr. Phinn accepted the invitation and joined Sir Charles after dinner. The latter, however, never offered to repay the shilling: but he did better—he told the barrister, who was a keen sportsman, he should have the shooting of the Warneford estates in Gloucestershire, of which he (Sir Charles) was trustee. "I had thus for my shilling," Mr. Phinn would say, "three years' of capital shooting—the cheapest thing I ever enjoyed in my life."

The Crystal Cage.

THE TROUBLES OF THE CRYSTAL PALACE OF 1851.

"The course of this marvellous building, for the celebration of the world's festival of labour, does not appear—any more than true love—to run smooth. The exhibitors of polished steel articles declare that owing to the admission of wet, they cannot trust their precious wares to the place, and that the glass must be caulked to exclude rain. The sun came down so hotly on the heads of the workmen last week, that they were compelled to desist for nearly a day. For both these evils, however, there is said to be a remedy. The roof will be covered with linen, that will exclude the rain, if it rains, and if it is sunshine, will abate its fervour as a shade, and keep it cool by means of water, that will be kept constantly playing on the canvas. There is, however, another evil, for which no remedy has yet been devised, and which is of much greater importance than one might, at the first mention of it, fancy—namely, the intrusion into the building of a myriad of sparrows, which are making nests, flying about, chirping so as to deafen you, and befouling everything to a most mischievous extent: they can't net them, the place is so large; they can't shoot them, without breaking the glass, and the sparrows, as if aware of the advantages they possess over the owners of the premises, *won't go out*. In fact, the Commissioners are posed and puzzled by the sparrows, and they feel, unless they can get rid of these clouds of mischievous intruders, the exhibitors will have their fine fabrics spoiled, and will perhaps themselves realise the fact that awoke Tobit from his slumbers. A Bristol exhibitor, a few days since, overheard one of the Commissioners exclaim, with as much bitterness as if it were the Pope he was speaking of, 'Those infernal things—what shall we do with them!' 'Tis hard to say, for they pay no respect to Persian silks or Genoa velvets, and serve all alike."—*Bristol Times*, of Saturday, March 28, 1851. See also other papers of last week.

Prince Albert pushed his cutlet and tomato sauce from before him, and rose up from the breakfast table, apparently too troubled in spirit to eat.

Her Majesty noticed the act, and inquired the cause.

"Those confounded sparrows!" cried the Prince, with great distress—"we can't get them out."

"Oh, sit down, and eat your breakfast," interposed her Majesty, soothingly, "and I'll write an order to the Horse Guards to send up a whole regiment of the line to shoot them."

The Prince groaned out, "Oh, no; the cure would be worse than the disease—they'd break all the glass."

The Queen saw and felt for his distress. "I never liked the Exhibition," she thought, "but it is his hobby, and I must not let these stupid little sparrows make him unhappy." So she sat down at the escritoire, and taking up a gold pen, wrote a note at once to the Premier, requiring his attendance at Buckingham Palace. As the Royal messenger was seen dashing at top speed into Chesham Place, people said 'twas another ministerial crisis, but *'twasn't*.

"What's the matter, your Majesty?" cried the Premier, making his appearance, pale and out of breath.

"The sparrows," said her Majesty, "in the Crystal Palace." And as she spoke she nodded her head to Prince Albert, who was walking about at the upper part of the room, striking his forehead, and attending to no one, his mind being occupied with the one sad thought.

"You know we can't shoot them, Lord John," observed her Majesty, "or I'd soon silence them with a park of artillery."

"No, your Majesty," mused the First Lord of the Treasury, biting his nails; and, after a pause, he added, "*We might net them.*"

The Queen clapped her hands in glee. "Albert, Albert," she exclaimed, "don't fret—Lord John has found a remedy—*we'll net them.*"

"Nonsense," replied the Prince Consort rather gruffly and ungratefully, "you can't—the place is too large."

Her Majesty's face fell at once, as she mournfully repeated her Consort's words, "'tis too large, Lord John—think again."

Lord John bit his nails, and thought again. "I have it," said he, after a longer meditation than before.

The Queen's eyes sparkled. "Have you!" cried she, in ecstasy. "What, Lord John—do please say what at once?"

"Fumigate the place—smother them with sulphur."

"Capital!" cried the Queen. "Albert, Albert," she shouted out once more, "We have it this time—we'll smother them."

"*Can't*," sulkily retorted Saxe Coburg and Gotha. "I thought of that myself—but 'twont do. Stink all the goods, and spoil them."

The Queen looked miserable once more, and begged of her Prime Minister to think again, but he couldn't, and left the Palace.

The Bishop of London now called by chance, and her Majesty at once consulted him. Blomfield was always a courtier: he looked wise, vowed his service over and over, and said "he'd go home, and look at the canons of the church."

"Don't mind it," interposed her Majesty; "your canons always make a dreadful noise, but take no effect."

Still Prince Albert kept pacing up and down, and groaning out ejaculations from time to time about these confounded sparrows; and every groan sent a pang to her Majesty's heart. "I have determined," she exclaimed, "I'll send for the Duke."

Another letter and another courier to bear it to Apsley House. The Royal missive ran thus:—

My dear Duke.—Do come at once: my kind and true friend in every emergency. Albert is in sad taking about these horrid sparrows that have got into the Exhibition Building. You can do every thing: you can help us to get them out. Ever yours, V.R.

The Duke was standing at the window when the Royal messenger alighted at the door. He knew the man by his livery. "Humph," cried he, "I hope Russell is not again in one of his resignation fits." He took the letter off the silver dish, and opened it. He seemed annoyed, and immediately sat down in a pet to write.

F.M. the Duke of Wellington presents his loyal duty to his Sovereign. F.M. the Duke of Wellington is commander-in-chief of her Majesty's land forces, and as such thinks the service upon which he is summoned out of his province. F.M. the Duke of Wellington is not a bird-catcher. F.M. the Duke of Wellington understands there are several following this line of life in the neighbourhood of the Seven Dials, to whom, if it be her Majesty's pleasure, he will make known the royal request. F.M. the Duke of Wellington has had considerable experience in capturing French eagles, but none in taking English sparrows.

His Grace read the note—gave a grim smile, then repented, tore it, and ordering his horse, said he would be at Buckingham Palace in twenty minutes.

The Prince was still walking about restless, when the Duke arrived.

The Queen and Prince all but jumped into his arms, and reminded him of *Quatre Bras*.

"Oh last and best resort of difficulty and danger! what do you suggest?" ejaculated the Sovereign.

"A Sparrow Hawk," said the Duke bowing.

"Oh ever fertile in resources," exclaimed the Prince; "to place a difficulty before you is to have a remedy. We'll have the sparrow hawks," he added.

"We will," said the Queen; and an extensive order for sparrow hawks was immediately issued.

In the mean time, the twittering colony in the Crystal Palace were not unconscious of what was taking place at its Buckingham neighbour, and had a couple of messengers of their own flying between the "two houses," bearing hourly intelligence of the consultations held for turning them out of office. Thus, when Lord John Russell was with her Majesty, a clever, sharp-eared young sparrow alighted on the sill of the window outside, and overheard the whole of the conversation. As soon as the Premier departed, Master Sparrow was back again, and gliding in through one of the ventilators, was soon telling the whole story to a council of veteran twitterers assembled on one of the highest branches. This council was presided over by a grey-headed old sparrow, the *Nestor* of the many flocks that flitted about the Crystal Palace.

When the young sparrow had told all that Lord John had said, "Pshaw!" cried the President of the Council. "Net us; and we forsooth are fools enough to go into the nets, while we have plenty of room to avoid them—Lord John has seen his best days. Unless they can get a wiser counsellor than that, we'll bother Prince Albert and his brother Commissioners, and break up their boasted Exhibition," and all the sparrows laughed and twittered, and provoked the Commissioners, who happened to be underneath, and who cried out with more vehemence than ever, "Hang these sparrows!" Another messenger sparrow flew in amongst the feathered council—"The Bishop of London has just left her

Majesty, and is going to eject us by Canon Law." A provokingly mirthful outburst of twittering followed the announcement.

"The Bishop of London has enough to do to mind his own business," said the veteran sparrow: "let him first get some strange birds out of his own diocese, and then come to disturb us. But he had better not throw stones at us; ours is not the only Palace made of glass. I think we need not make ourselves uneasy, but go on building our nests." "We needn't," cried all the sparrows from all the branches, "we'll stay where we are."

"The Duke is sent for," exclaimed another messenger sparrow, making his appearance, and with some sign of trepidation.

"The Duke," repeated they—but there was no banter in their twitter now.

But the President of the Sparrows' Council still put a bold face on the matter, and said in boastful tone. "The Duke would find he had not a Napoleon to deal with this time;" nevertheless the sparrows were noticed not to go on as busily with their nest-building as before, when a fourth messenger flew in and said he had just overheard the Duke suggest "a sparrow-hawk." "Then I'm off," exclaimed the veteran President of the Council, popping out through a ventilator. "That horrid old Duke! I was afraid he would hit upon an expedient."

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